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ABSTRACT

Twenty mental health consultant reports are presented on the field testing of three questionnaires for identifying potential problems in schools. The staff and student questionnaires are broken into ten areas: student characteristics and relationships; student general satisfaction; student-teacher relationships; teacher characteristics and relationships; principal-student relationships; principal-teacher relationships; school-community relationships; groups at risk--including cheaters, dropouts, vandals, and activists; community characteristics; and school features--such as busing, class size, and physical facilities. The principals' questionnaire, the Demographic Information Form, is used to record demographic data about the school and community, as well as opinions about the ten problem areas. One report involves three elementary schools; the remainder, including a validity study of the student questionnaire, involve secondary schools. A variety of schools were represented in these reports--urban, rural, parochial, open plan, and open enrollment. Some had experienced specific problems, such as dropouts, racial strife, and poor relationships between principals, students, and teachers. In general, the consultants were positive about the impact of the questionnaires, since staff and administration were motivated to examine problems carefully, and to confirm opinions about strengths and weaknesses of their schools. No firm conclusions could be reached because of the relatively small number of schools involved in the field testing. (CP)

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MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTANT REPORTS OF THE FIELD TRIALS OF INSTRUMENTS FOR SURVEYING PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS

Edited by

Elaine N. Taylor and Robert Vineberg

HUMAN RESOURCES RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

300 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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FOREWORD

This report contains a collection of papers summarizing the experiences of consultants who used school survey instruments developed by HumRRO. The instruments were designed to identify problems in schools that may be treated by the joint effort of school personnel and mental health consultants to schools.

The papers are based upon presentations by the consultants during a conference held in October 1975.

This is the final report of a research project supported by NIMH. Dr. Charles Windle, Program Evaluation Specialist, Division of Mental Health Service Programs, National Institute of Mental Health, was the Project Officer.

The cooperation of the consultants and the school personnel who participated in the field trials is gratefully acknowledged.

The study was conducted at HumRRO Western Division, Carmel, California. Project staff included Dr. Elaine N. Taylor, Principal Investigator, Dr. Robert Vineberg, Dr. S. James Goffard and Mr. John T. McGiveran.

Work on the development of the manual was performed under NIMH Grants Number 3 R01 MH 21708-01, -02. A preliminary workshop, the field trials and the conference were supported by NIMH Grants Number 3 R01 MH 21708-02S1 and -02S2. The period of performance of the entire study was 1 June 1972 to 31 December 1975.

Dr. Howard H. McFann
Vice-President - HumRRO,
Director HumRRO - Western Division

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INTRODUCTION

In 1974 instruments were published for use in exploring those features of a school and its setting that may give rise to individual, group, or systemic problems. The final phase in the development of these screening instruments was based upon a pilot study involving 50 schools in 6 states. Following the pilot study a workshop was held to introduce the procedures and instruments to 20 carefully selected mental health consultants, 2 each from the 10 NIMH Regions.¹ During the fall semester, 1974, and the spring semester, 1975, these instruments were used in schools by 15 of the original 20 mental health consultants who had attended the workshop. This report is a compilation of papers presented by the consultants at a conference in which they described their individual experiences and findings based on the use of the instruments.² It is the final report of a study supported by a research grant provided by NIMH to develop procedures for planning mental health consultation services to schools.

Earlier reports have been:

Surveying School Problems: Some Individual, Group, and System Indicators. A Manual, by Elaine N. Taylor, Robert Vineberg, and S. James Goffard, HUPRO Technical Report 74-22, 1974.³

This manual presents information on three instruments designed for surveying mental health problems in schools. The instruments are two questionnaires (The School Problem Area Survey--Staff and the School Problem Area Survey--Students), and a guide (the Demographic Information Form) for use by a mental health consultant in interviewing a school principal.

The instruments are also appropriate for use by school personnel who may be working without the assistance of a mental health consultant.

¹The workshop and subsequent field trials were supported by NIMH Grant Number 3 R01 MH 21708-02S1.

²The conference and the preparation of this document were supported by NIMH Grant Number 3 R01 MH 21708-02S2.

³Work on the development of the manual was performed under NIMH Grants Numbers 3 R01 21708-01, 02.

The manual contains an outline of the necessary steps to be taken to obtain the interview and questionnaire data, an outline of the statistical procedures involved in data analysis, and a set of guidelines for interpreting the data from the three sources of information in order to assign priorities to problems. Appendix materials include directions for hand computation of the data, keypunch instructions and a computer program, and notes on the development of the instruments.

Summary Report of Workshop: Procedures for Identifying Mental Health Problems in Schools, Elaine N. Taylor, Robert Vineberg, S. James Goffard, HumRRO, Western Division, 1974.

This report describes a workshop that was held to acquaint mental health consultants with the instruments and the procedures for their use. Specifically, the workshop objectives were: to disseminate information about these instruments; to provide training in the use of the procedures and instruments; to prepare two mental health consultants in each of the ten HJW Regions as resource persons for others in their region who may want to employ the planning methodology; to arrange field trials of the methodology by the participants during the next school year.

Field Trials of Instruments Designed to Survey Problems in Schools, S. James Goffard, Elaine N. Taylor, Robert Vineberg, HumRRO, Western Division, Report RP-WD-CA-75-18, 1975.

Initial compilations of field trial data were forwarded to the HumRRO staff for analysis. Data of 10 junior high schools were combined and a profile of the "average" junior high school was drawn. A similar analysis was carried out for 5 high schools. These data were also used to illustrate the computation of "expected" scores for questionnaire items. "Expected" scores can be used as benchmarks in interpreting a school's data.

The present document contains the reports prepared by the consultants on their experiences in the application of the screening instruments. Part I contains two papers that are somewhat different from the rest. The first, by Adams, is a very complete documentation of the use of the instruments in a survey of a junior high school in Arkansas. It is presented first because it gives the reader a detailed description of the contents of the instruments and can be used as a reference as the remaining reports are read.

The second paper presents a factor analysis of items contained in the student questionnaire by Morrow and Rubenstein. It is presented early in

the report to provide the reader with an analytic overview of the structure of the student questionnaire. The questionnaires had been designed originally by grouping items largely on the basis of a rational analysis of their content. In general, the factor analysis supports the validity of these groupings.

Part II contains the remainder of the consultant reports arranged by school level. First, five high school surveys are presented, next five junior high school surveys, and finally, three elementary school surveys.

Since the student form of the questionnaires had been developed for students who are at least at the junior high school level, its use at the elementary level was supplemented by a survey of a random sample of parents by one consultant.

Part III starts with a brief summary of some contrasting and some common experiences reported by the consultants. Then, some data from each of the schools are presented in summary form and discussed. The section concludes with some specific suggestions made by the consultants as a result of the field trials.

PART I

A JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL SURVEY REPORT

Julius Adams

Field Coordinator

Ouachita Regional Counseling and Mental Health Center, Arkansas

I. INTRODUCTION

A survey was conducted by the Mental Health Center at a Junior High School in a southern-central state during May, 1974. Three screening instruments were used:

1. The Demographic Information Form
2. Problem area Survey - Staff
3. Problem area Survey - Student

These instruments are screening devices for identifying possible problem areas which can be used in planning and program development.

The data from the instruments has been compiled, grouped and analyzed and contained in this report.

All three instruments contain corresponding items and can be paralleled for grouping and analysis.

II. PROCEDURE

In an initial interview with the principal the feasibility of the survey was discussed and a date for a second interview was set for the purpose of completing the Demographic Information Form.

The student sample was selected and a date selected for the student and staff surveys.

The Demographic Information Form was completed in an interview with the principal in May, 1974.

The student and staff surveys were also completed in May, 1974.

The Center compiled the data from the three survey forms and organized it into areas, listing strong points and potential problems. The data was compared and analyzed for areas of conflict and agreement between the three components surveyed.

III. SAMPLES AND INSTRUMENTS

A. Student Sample:

A sample of 59, eighth grade students was selected randomly by a table of random numbers. Forty-four of the 59 selected responded to the questionnaire. This was caused by a high rate of absenteeism on the date of the survey, which was held on a day of extreme weather conditions. The survey could not be rescheduled because of end of school activities.

The eighth grade was assumed to be representative of the student body and was selected as the group to be sampled for two reasons.

(1) They had spent two years in the school and would have a better understanding of the school strengths and weaknesses, (2) They would be attending this school next year and would have a greater investment in the results of the survey.

The sample of 59 students represented 8% of the student body, with 75% responding which represents 6% of the student body. The sample of 59 students represented 25% of the eighth grade, with 75% responding, which is 18% of the eighth grade.

The achievement level of the sample was compared to the achievement level of the eighth grade: The mean grade equivalent of the composite score of the SRA achievement test was 6.8 for the sample and 6.8 for the eighth grade class on national norms. The range on the same test scores was 3.2 - 12.9 for the sample and 3.2 - 12.9 for the class.

Ethnic distribution and sex distribution of the sample were checked and verified by the principal and counselor as being representative of the student body.

B. Staff Survey:

All staff members completed a survey in a staff meeting. (N=37)

C. Staff's Report (Problem Area Survey - Staff)

The problem area survey - staff is a questionnaire to obtain from teachers and other staff estimates of the importance in their school of a variety of potential problems.

This questionnaire contains 70 items and requires approximately 20 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. In the first part, six sections of six questions each, the teachers estimate the extent to which they see problems about the characteristics of and inter-relationships among students, teachers, the principal and the community. In the remainder of the questionnaire they identify groups at risk and rate importance of a variety of features or aspects of their school.

The items in this questionnaire are intended simply for screening of problem areas. To gain more specificity of the problem area a more intense investigation of the area would be necessary.

The questionnaire is designed with a rating scale of 1 - 6 for each item, 1 being the rating for an "extreme problem" and 5 or 6 for "no problem at all" or "exceptionally good."

D. Student's Report (Problem Area Survey - Student)

The Student Problem Area Survey is very much like the staff questionnaire. The students estimate the importance of a variety of potential problems by rating items on the same scale used in the staff questionnaire.

The student questionnaire contains 49 items in basically the same areas, with corresponding items being used for both staff and students.

E. Principal's Report (Demographic Information Form)

The principal's report contains questions arranged in five sections.

Section I. General characteristics: School setting, income levels in the community, community support of the schools, and relations with the community and Central (District) Administration etc.

Section II. School Characteristics: grades served, enrollment, curriculum, special programs, special problems, student discipline, etc.

Section III. Staff Characteristics: Composition, experience and adequacy of the professional staff, staff turnover, and inservice training, etc.

Section IV. Student Characteristics: Economic origins and ethnic composition of student body, level of achievement on standardized tests, absenteeism and student involvement in extracurricular activities, etc.

Section V. Summarization: The principal's feelings about the needs, problems and special strength of his school.

The information from this part of the survey will give basic data to be used in later comparisons with the student and staff survey forms.

IV. PROCEDURE OF ANALYSIS

A. Rationale of analysis

The staff and student questionnaires are broken into 10 areas with corresponding items in all except two areas, general student satisfaction and teacher-principal relationships. The principal's report gives basic data about the school and community as well as his feelings about the 10 areas included in the student and staff questionnaires.

The rationale of the analyses is based on two criteria; importance and impact of the identified problems. The importance of a problem is inferred from the data gathered by the three instruments. The relative importance of the problems presented in either questionnaire is inferred from the mean and T-score of its rating by the respondents. The more often the respondents rate an item toward the "extreme problem" end of the scale, the lower the mean and T-score rating will be. Items with means which are low relative to the mean of the other items in the questionnaire are assumed to have greater importance for the respondents.

The data from the three sources (the staff, students and principal) should be given equal weight in determining the priority of the various problems.

Priorities will be established when the impact of each problem has been determined. The impact of a problem depends upon the number of persons affected by it, and the extent to which it may disrupt achievement of the educational goals of the school.

Four classes of problems which differ in impact have been identified. These classes are listed in a hierarchical order, based upon the number of persons affected by the problems and the extent to which each may threaten the achievement of the educational goals of the school.

1. Problems having the potential to render the school inoperable.
2. Problems which preclude effective learning by sizeable numbers of students.

3. Systemic problems of the school which interfere with the successful accomplishment of its mission.

4. Problems of individual students which interfere with their learning and/or socialization.

B. Statistical Procedure

The following statistical procedure was used in compiling, analyzing and reporting the data collected from the two survey instruments. After receiving the surveys, the responses were tabulated for each group on an item-questionnaire matrix and the mean rating for each item was calculated.

An overall mean and variance for each questionnaire as a whole was calculated. The mean item scores were standardized by transforming them into T-scores (using a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10) for the purpose of comparing the data on the two questionnaires. To determine which items are significantly different from the overall mean, we employed the convention that any deviation greater than ± 2 standard deviations will be considered a reliable or significant difference. The mean T-score for each section and area of the questionnaire was calculated. The sections or areas were ordered from high to low on the basis of their mean T-score. The items were ordered from high to low on the basis of their T-scores.

C. Definition of Terms:

1. Critical problem level - refers to items or areas that were rated by the respondents at T-Score 30 or below, which is the high significance level for potential problems in the school.

2. Low neutral level - refers to items or areas rated by the respondents between T-Score 31 and T-Score 50.

3. High neutral level - refers to items or areas rated by the respondents between T-Score 51 and T-Score 69.

4. High positive level - refers to items or areas rated by the respondents at T-Score 70 and above, which is the high significance level for areas of strength in the school.

5. Average mean and average T-Score - refers to the averages for a problem area.

V. ANALYSIS OF AREAS

A. Area I - Student Characteristics and Relationship (Refer to Table A)

This section of the questionnaire is designed to allow both the staff and the students to estimate the extent to which they see problems about the characteristics of and interrelationships among students.

The staff listed four items at the critical problem level, one item in the low neutral range and one in the high neutral range. The total average for the areas was listed in the significant range with an average mean of 2.39 and an average T-score of 24.6.

The students listed all items in the neutral range with four items below T-score 50 and two items above T-score 50, with an average mean of 3.27 and an average T-score of 47.2.

The principal's report describes the student characteristics as:

1. Socioeconomic distribution - 75% lower low to lower middle range and 25% in upper middle.
2. 375 students on free lunch program. (51%)
3. 250 students from families on welfare. (34%)
4. Ethnic composition: 56% white, 43% black and 1% or less spanish surname.
5. Levels of achievement relative to national norms: reading - 47% below average, 35% average and 18% above average; arithmetic - 44% below average, 37% average and 19% above average.
6. 8% absent each day.
7. Student's involvement and support of extracurricular activities was rated as High.
8. Other areas of the report that describe student characteristics and relationships.
 - a. Discipline - 142 cases per month are referred to special school personnel and 28 to agencies outside the school: 55 for breaking school rules, 32 for being disorderly, 27 for assaultive behavior (fighting), 26 chronic absenteeism, 13 failure to perform school work, 15 for disrespect to people in authority and 2 for destruction or stealing of property.

AREA I - Student-Student Relationships

TABLE A

Staff				Student			
Item	Item Means	+ N	T Score	Item	Item Means	+ N	T Score
1	2.57	N	31	7	3.09	N	39
2	1.89	-	8*	8	3.17	N	43
3	2.22	-	19*	9	3.39	N	53
4	2.41	-	25*	10	3.05	N	37
5	1.81	-	5*	11	3.29	N	48
6	3.46	N	60	12	3.61	N	63
AVE	2.39	-	24.6*	AVE	3.27	N	47.2

Staff Items

Is this a problem in your school?

1. The way the students get along with each other.
- *2. The number of students who are emotionally immature or are behavior problems.
- *3. Large differences in the backgrounds of the students; social, ethnic or economic.
- *4. Friction or hostility between groups of students.
- *5. The number of students who lack self confidence, ambition or interest in school
6. The number of students who don't seem to do much with other students - who are "loners".

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths

- = T - 30 + down - High Significance level for potential problems

N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant

* = High significance - problems

** = High significance - strength

Student Items

Is this a problem in your school?

7. The way the students get along with one another.
8. The number of students who are emotionally immature or are behavior problems.
9. Large differences in the background of the students; social, ethnic or economic.
10. Friction or hostility between groups of students.
11. The number of students who lack self confidence, ambition or interest in school.
12. The number of students who don't seem to do much with other students - who are "loners".

b. Groups at risk - 165 suspended from school, 6 on probation from courts, 3 pregnancies, 3 teenage parents, 175 behind one grade level, 100 underachievers, 50 potential dropouts, 10 dropouts, 90 transfers, 20 habitual absentees, 90 petty thefts, 4 major thefts, and 2 extortions.

There have been some problems with calls from the neighborhood about fighting and smoking on private property. Students have reacted negatively to lower tract class assignments.

The principal lists as the #1 pressing need of the school "socialization of students, including a better understanding between blacks and whites."

The staff and students disagree on the totals for this area. The staff feels that a significant problem does exist in student-student relationships and that the student characteristics create the potential for problems in the school.

The principal's report implies a number of conditions that are potential problem areas and supports the staff's feeling.

There are degrees of agreement between the student's individual item responses and the principal's and staff's responses. All three reports indicate a problem "with the way students get along with each other," with students being the least concerned. Both staff and students indicate that friction and hostility exist between groups of students. The staff rate items 2 and 5 very low; these items deal with the number of emotionally immature students and the number of students who lack self-confidence, ambition or interest in school. The students rate both items below T-score 50, but not in the critical area. The principal's report supports the staff perception on both these items by descriptive behavior indicated.

Both staff and students indicate that most students have a group relationship and that "loners" are the exception rather than the rule.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT (data - area I)

Weaknesses

- (1) Socialization of students - including a better understanding between blacks and whites.

- (2) Lack of parental concern for student achievement.
- (3) Limited playground and parking space.
- (4) Need for more black teachers.

Strengths

- (1) High percentage of experienced teachers.
- (2) Pride of students in activity program.
- (3) Special programs for slow learners and underachieving students.
- (4) Success of athletic program.
- (5) A variety of course offerings.

Conclusion:

There is a problem of interpersonal relationship between individual students and groups of students at the school. The cause of the problem can be attributed to:

- 1. Lack of socialization skills, as described by the principal and verified by records of discipline problems.
- 2. Large differences in backgrounds of students; social, ethnic or economic.
- 3. The number of students who are emotionally immature and lack self-confidence, ambition or interest in school.
- 4. Failure to meet with success in the classroom.

The above problems or causes of problems were rated or implied in the three reports submitted by school personnel.

The interpersonal problems between students are probably due to a lack of interpersonal and social skills on the part of many students attending the school, the result being inappropriate action in conflict situations. The level of sensitivity to others by many of the students is probably low, due to the differences in backgrounds and the level of emotional maturity and self-confidence. Many students are probably overly sensitive to the action and reaction of others and are overly defensive in an attempt to cope with the anxieties created by minor conflict situations. This is probably a result of the low socioeconomic background of many of the students in this school.

A lack of knowledge of how to handle conflict and social situations or at least a lack of practice in use of skills is indicated and would suggest that training in these areas would be helpful.

B. Area II - Student - General Satisfaction (Refer to Table B)

This section contains items for student responses only. It is designed to sample the students' feelings of satisfaction with the school environment.

The students rated one item at the critical level, one item at the low neutral, one item at the high neutral and three items at the high positive level. They rate the total for the area at the high neutral level, with an average mean of 3.5 and an average T-score of 61.8.

Item #4, dealing with "disorder, noise and general confusion in halls and classrooms" was rated at the critical problem level.

Item #6, dealing with "unfair treatment of students by teachers" was rated at the low neutral level.

Item #2, dealing with "threats of violence to teachers by students" was rated at the lower limits of the high neutral level.

Items #1, #3 and #5 dealing with "needed and like subjects," "students show good school spirit," and "fair treatment of student by principal and office staff" are at the high positive level.

The principal's report states that the emphasis upon various curriculum fields in relation to students needed is about right in the academic field, but is under emphasized in the vocational and business fields.

The amount of pressure toward student achievement by administrative staff, principal and teachers is about right. The parents and students apply too little pressure.

The report states the students have some freedom of choice in courses required for graduation and electives, and a lot of choice in activities and organized athletics.

There are special sections of regular courses for exceptional students (advanced science, algebra, history and english) (remedial and slow learner sections).

Special units:

- (1) Family living in Home Economics.
- (2) Sex education and drugs in science courses.
- (3) Ethnic studies in social studies and
- (4) Vocational training in Home Economics and woodworking shop.

The school has a minimal, liberal dress code, which is enforced leniently and accepted by 80% of the students.

AREA II - Student - General Satisfaction

TABLE-B

Staff			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
AVE	None		None

Students			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
1	4.02	+	81
2	3.36	N	51
3	4.17	+	88
4	2.66	-	20
5	4.07	+	94
6	3.04	N	37
AVE	3.55	N	61.8

Staff Items

None

Student Items

- Is this a problem in your school?
- **1. Finding subjects that you need and like.
 - 2. Students who threaten teachers with physical violence.
 - **3. Getting the students to show some school spirit.
 - *4. Disorder, noise and general confusion in the halls and classrooms.
 - **5. Unfair treatment of students by the principal or the people in his office.
 - 6. Unfair treatment of students by teachers.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 * = High significance - problems
 ** = High significance - strength

Conclusion:

The only item in this section that was rated as a critical problem implies that the students are not pleased with disruptions and conflict and would like their school environment to be more settled and tranquil. However, the question may be raised that if they feel this way, why do they continue to participate in the confusion and disruption?

The reasons could be tied to the student characteristics listed in the last section, emotional immaturity and lack of self-confidence, and environmental factors. Peer pressure would probably make it difficult for a student to admit that the absence of conflict is desirable and it would be considered a display of weakness. Also, the inability to select better alternatives to conflict could be a lack of knowledge or mistrust of unfamiliar reactions to conflict situations.

Strict interpretation of the data would indicate that this is a minor problem, but if it is considered as a part of the more complex problems of student-student and teacher-teacher relationships, the importance and impact could be much greater.

This survey does not measure the specific disruptive factors to any great extent and to be able to determine the importance of the problem item it would be necessary to do further identification and evaluation of these factors.

If it is discovered that the students do desire less conflict and disruption, and it could be determined what factors they are concerned with, their apparent concern could be capitalized upon and used in program development.

C. Area III - Teacher-Student Relationships (Refer to Table C)

This section is designed to sample staff and students feelings about their interrelationships.

The principal's report will furnish data that is related to the student and staff responses.

The staff responses indicate a positive teacher-student relationship. Four of the six items were rated at the positive significant level, and two at the neutral level. The average for the section is rated at the high neutral level, with an average mean of 3.70 and an average T-score of 68.3.

AREA III Teacher - Student Relationship

TABLE C

Staff			
Item	Item Means	+ N	T Score
7	3.16	N	50
8	2.78	N	38
9	3.84	+	73
10	4.27	+	87
11	4.08	+	81
12	4.08	+	81
AVE	3.70	N	68.3

Student			
Item	Item Means	+ N	T Score
13	3.46	N	56
14	2.00	-	-10
15	2.98	N	34
16	2.66	-	29
17	3.63	N	64
18	2.70	-	21
AVE	2.80	-	30.8

Staff Items

Is this a problem in your school?

7. The usual social atmosphere or feeling in the classroom.
8. The respect teachers and students have for one another.
- ** 9. Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and educational problems of their students.
- ** 10. Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades.
- ** 11. Teachers who don't seem to be consistent in the way they grade student work.
- ** 12. Teachers who won't admit to making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question.

Student items

Is this a problem in your school?

13. The usual social atmosphere or feeling in the classroom.
- *14. The respect teachers and students have for one another.
15. Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and educational problems of their students.
- *16. Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades.
17. Teachers who don't seem to be consistent in the way they grade your work.
- *18. Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 ** = High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

The lowest item was #8, "The respect teachers and students have or one another."

The students responses border on the critical problem level. Three items were rated at the critical problem level, one item at the low neutral level, and two items at the high neutral level.

Item #14 was rated lowest, T-score of -10, "The respect teachers and students have for one another."

Item #16 and Item #18 were rated about equal with T-scores of 20 and 21, at the critical problem level. #16 states, "Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades." #18 states, "Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question."

Item #15, rated at the low neutral level, states, "Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and education problems of their students."

Items #13 and #17, rated at the high neutral level, and the highest items in the section. Item #13, "The usual social atmosphere of feeling in the classroom"; item #17, "Teachers who don't seem to be consistent in the way they grade your work."

The principal reports a variety of problems with students that could relate to this area. (Many of these were listed in Section B of this report.) There were 165 students suspended from school this year, six on probation from the courts, 175 were one or more grade levels behind, 10 drop-outs, 50 potential drop-outs, 100 underachievers, 90 transfers, and 20 habitual absentees. There were 90 petty thefts, 4 major thefts, 2 extortions and approximately \$800 in vandalism costs last year.

There are approximately 170 cases per month referred to special school personnel and outside agencies for disciplinary problems.

The principal spends approximately twenty hours per month on disciplinary cases and the assistant principal fifty hours.

Corporal punishment is used approximately forty times per month as a control measure. Corporal punishment may be administered by the principal, assistant principal, and teachers.

The principal listed as the number one problem of the school, "needs for socialization of students, including a better understanding of blacks and whites." He also states that, "fears, anxieties, and frustrations of students are base causes for many of the problems leading to suspensions and corporal punishments."

There is a degree of agreement between staff and students on two corresponding sets of items. Staff item #8 and student item #14, "The respect teachers and students have for one another," were rated low by both and indicate conflicts between teachers and students. Also, the principal's report of the number of suspensions, the time spent on disciplinary referrals, and the frequency of punishment indicates area of conflict. Also, his statement "fears, anxieties and frustrations of students that lead to disciplinary problems," supports the assumption of conflicts. However, the causes of conflicts are not identified specifically. The students express some generally hostile feeling in item #15 -- "Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and educational problems of their students"; item #16, "Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades"; and item #18, "Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question." These items all indicate feelings of non-acceptance and non-support. The extent to which this is true is really not the important issue, but the fact that the students feel non-acceptance makes it a problem, regardless of whether teachers are accepting or supportive or not.

The key issue seems to be the feeling of both teachers and students that there is a lack of respect for one another, regardless of the causes for the feelings or the reality of the existence of the negative feeling of one for the other.

Conclusion:

This section shows a greater staff-student disagreement than any other section in the survey. This itself indicates a lack of understanding of how the staff and students feel about one another. The items referred to in the summary indicate distrust and hostility on the part of students toward the teachers.

AREA IV Teacher Characteristics and Relationships

TABLE D

Staff				Student			
Item	Item Means	+ - N	T- Score	Item	Item Means	+ - N	T- Score
13	4.30	+	88	19	4.56	+	106
14	4.46	+	94	-	-	-	-
15	4.00	+	78	-	-	-	-
16	3.76	+	70	20	4.10	+	85
17	3.76	+	70	-	-	-	-
18	4.41	+	92	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	21	1.71	-	23
AVE	4.12	+	82	AVE	3.46	+	71

Staff Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- **13. Teachers who don't get along with the other teachers.
- **14. Disagreements among the staff on the proper educational goals for the school.
- **15. Disagreements among the staff on the proper balance between traditional and innovative approaches to teaching.
- **16. Teachers who seem bored with teaching.
- **17. Teachers with little interest in increasing their professional competence and improving their teaching.
- **18. Older teachers who are reluctant to accept newer teachers as colleagues.

Student Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- **19. Teachers who don't get along with the other teachers.
- **20. Teachers who seem bored with teaching.
- *21. Teachers who are usually boring.

+ = T-70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T-30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T-31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 ** = High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

The staff, student and principal mostly agree on corresponding items for this section. The inference is that the staff relates well to one another, and that they perform their duties in a professional manner. The one negative item expressed by the students was #21 - "Teachers who are usually boring." This item again refers to how teachers relate to students. It was interesting that the students discriminated between "teachers who seem bored with teaching" and those who "are usually boring."

Conclusions:

There seemed to be no problems of any significance in this section. The only critical problem item supported the statement of the last section, concerning student's hostility toward teacher's behavior, and should be considered in the overall problem summary and recommendation section.

E. Area V - Principal-Student Relationships (Refer to Table E)

This section is designed to sample the staff and students' feelings in regard to the relationship of the principal and his office staff with the students.

The staff rated two items at the positive level, two items at the high neutral level and two items at the low neutral level. No items were rated at the critical problem level.

The students rated one item at the positive level, three items at the high neutral level and two items at the low neutral level. No items were rated at the critical problem level.

The principal reported very little directly on this section - however, a good student-principal relationship could be inferred from the general tone of this report.

The staff and students both rated corresponding items lowest on their surveys -- staff item #24 and student item #26 - "The way students are assigned to classes, graded and promoted." Also, the highest rated items are corresponding on the two surveys, staff item #19 and student item #22 - "The way the principal gets along with the students."

Area V Table E

Principal - Student Relationship

Staff			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
19	4.57	+	97
20	3.76	+	70
21	2.68	N	34
-	-	-	-
22	3.14	N	50
23	3.38	N	58
24	2.65	N	33
-	-	-	-
AVE	3.36	N	57

Student			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
22	4.10	+	85
23	3.56	N	60
-	-	-	-
24	3.61	N	63
-	-	-	-
25	3.61	N	63
26	2.93	N	32
27	3.05	N	37
AVE	3.48	N	56.6

Staff Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- **19. The way the principal gets along with the students.
- **20. Rules for students that put obedience ahead of freedom and individuality.
- 21. Loose or lax policies on students which foster disorderliness and disorganization.
- 22. Absence of a schoolwide system for identifying and dealing with students who have special educational needs or problems.
- 23. The amount of influence student opinion has on the way the school is run.
- 24. The policies followed in assigning students to classes, grading, and promoting them.

Student Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- **22. The way the principal gets along with the students.
- 23. Rules for student that put obedience ahead of freedom and individuality.
- 24. Rules for students that are not clear but are vague and indefinite.
- 25. The amount of influence student opinion has on the way the school is run.
- 26. The way students are assigned to classes, graded and promoted.
- 27. Rules for students that are not fairly or consistently enforced.

- + = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
- = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
- N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
- ** = High significance - strength
- * = High significance - problems

The total averages of both staff and students on this section are almost identical, staff average T-score 57 - student average T-score 56.6. The other staff item that was rated at the low neutral level is item #21 - "Loose or lax policies on students which foster disorderliness and disorganization."

The other student item rated at the low neutral level is item #27 - "Rules for students that are not fairly or consistently enforced."

The staff and students agree to a high degree on this section. Overall, the principal-student relations are good. The strongest point is the rapport the principal has with the students. The weakest point deals with policies and rules in the school as pointed out by both staff and students. Also, lack of organization and consistency seemed to be areas of concern.

F. Area VI - Principal-Teacher Relationship (Refer to Table F)

This section samples the teachers' feelings concerning the rapport, cooperation and working relationship between the principal and the staff.

The staff rated all items at the high positive level, with an average mean of 4.61 and an average T-score of 98.5 on the six items.

The principal's report was supportive of the staff, indicating that they were an experienced and competent professional staff, who entered into in-service programs with enthusiasm.

There were no student items in this section.

This section is very positive and indicates fine rapport and cooperation between the principal and the staff. This would indicate that the prognosis of solutions to problems that may exist in the school is very good.

Conclusion:

There were no critical problems identified in this section. Both teachers and students were relatively positive on the principal-student relationship.

The only indications of dissatisfaction had to do with policies and rules of the school and their implementation. This should be considered in the overall problem summary and recommendation section as a possible contributing factor to the problems identified.

Area VI Principal-Teacher Relationships

Table F

Staff			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
25	4.86	+	107
26	4.84	+	106
27	4.57	+	97
28	4.46	+	94
29	4.35	+	90
30	4.57	+	97
AVE	4.61	+	* 98.5

Student			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-

Staff

Student

Is this a problem in your school?

None

- ** 25. The way the principal gets along with the teachers.
- ** 26. The way the principal handles staff conflict.
- ** 27. Getting cooperation and support from the non-teaching staff (administrators, secretaries, custodians, etc.)
- ** 28. Pressure from the administration on the teachers to conform to traditional models of teacher behavior.
- ** 29. The way the principal evaluates teachers' performance.
- ** 30. The educational policies and practices advocated by the principal.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 ** ↓ High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

This is the most positive section in the report. It clearly indicates that the principal and staff have an excellent working relationship.

This will be extremely important in working toward solutions to problems. It would seem that the total staff in this school will be able to attack cooperatively almost any problem area and stay united in its work toward a solution. Also, with this attitude, it would seem that the staff would be in an excellent position to initiate changes in the student attitudes and gain their cooperation in the problem solving procedure.

G. Area VII - School-Community Relationship (Refer to Table G)

This section samples opinions and feelings of the staff and students on the relationship between the school personnel, parents and others of the community. The principal's report deals with school-community relationships also.

The staff rated two items at the high neutral level, three items at the low neutral level, one item at the critical problem level.

The students had only two items in this section and one item was rated at the positive level and one at the high neutral level.

The principal's report states that the financial support given the schools by the community was adequate. The community attitude toward:

- (1) additional expenditure is about evenly split,
- (2) new programs - supportive,
- (3) students - friendly.

The report indicates that some parents are not as supportive of some policies and expectations which affect students as would be desirable.

The staff rated item #35 - "Lack of community interest in the schools" - at the critical problem level. There was disagreement on corresponding items #31 and #28 between staff and students, which deal with parent-teacher relationships. The students felt that it was positive, but the staff rated it at the low neutral level. Some agreement was indicated on corresponding items #32 and #29, dealing with the "way people in the neighborhood felt about the school." The staff rated it at the low neutral level and the students rated it at the high neutral level.

Area VII School - Community Relationships

Table G

Staff			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
31	2.48	N	40
32	2.92	N	42
33	2.27	-	21
34	3.49	N	61
35	3.05	N	47
36	3.22	N	52
Ave	2.90	N	43.8

Student			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
28	3.90	+	76
29	3.37	N	52
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
Ave	3.64	N	64

Staff

Is this a problem in your school?

- 31. The relationship between teachers and parents.
- 32. The way the people in this neighborhood feel about the school.
- * 33. Lack of community interest in the schools.
- 34. Teacher dissatisfaction with the community.
- 35. Community dissatisfaction with the schools.
- 36. School policies that conflict with parents' ideas.

Students

Is this a problem in your school?

- ** 28. The way the teachers get along with the parents of their students.
- 29. The way the people in this neighborhood feel about the school.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 ** = High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

Summary:

There seems to be some indication of a lack of interest by the community in the schools, however, this does not seem to be a major problem.

Conclusion:

The community seems to lack an active, positive and supportive interest in school programs as a whole. It seems that a more cooperative relationship could exist between the parents and staff. This could be beneficial in dealing with student problems that arise.

H. Area VIII - Groups at Risk (Refer to Table H)

This section is designed to identify groups at risk and rate the importance of problem areas as observed by the staff, students and principal.

The staff rated eight items at the critical problem level, four items at the low neutral level and three items at the high neutral level. No items were rated at the positive level.

The students rated four items at the critical problem level, one at the low neutral level, three items at the high neutral level and two at the positive level.

As was reported in section B, the principal's report identifies basically the same groups as does the staff in this section.

The staff, students and principal agree generally to a large degree on this section. Specific agreement is shown on staff item #38, and student item #30 "Cheating," staff item #39 and student item #31, "Cutting class", staff item #43 and student item #35 "Theft," and staff item #50 and student item #39 "Violence or threats of violence." All these items were rated by both students and staff at the critical problem level.

The staff rated item #37, "Underachievement," item #40, "Absenteeism," item #49, "Profanity" and #51 "Students who speak non-standard English," as critical level problems.

Table H

Staff				Student			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score	Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
37	1.76	-	4	-	-	-	-
38	2.16	-	17	30	2.68	-	20
39	1.97	-	11	31	2.17	-	-3
40	2.00	-	12	32	3.20	N	44
41	2.81	N	39	33	3.46	N	56
42	2.62	N	32	34	3.46	N	56
43	2.30	-	22	35	2.59	-	16
44	3.22	N	52	36	4.05	+	83
45	3.14	N	59	37	3.90	+	76
46	3.03	N	46	-	-	-	-
47	3.27	N	54	-	-	-	-
48	2.59	N	31	38	3.44	N	55
49	1.43	-	-7	-	-	-	-
50	2.27	-	21	39	2.63	-	18
51	2.32	-	22	-	-	-	-
AVE	2.25	-	27.7	AVE	3.16	N	40.3

2 staff

- *37. Underachievement
- *38. Cheating
- *39. Cutting Class
- *40. Absenteeism
- 41. Dropout rate
- 42. Vandalism
- *43. Theft
- 44. Drugs
- 45. Alcohol
- 46. Sexual promiscuity
- 47. Teenage parents
- 48. Delinquency
- *49. Profanity
- *50. Violence or threats of violence.
- *51. Students who speak non-standard english.

3. Students

- *30. Cheating
- *31. Cutting class
- 32. Absenteeism
- 33. Dropouts
- 34. Vandalism
- *35. Theft
- 36. Drugs
- 37. Alcohol
- 38. Delinquency
- *39. Violence or threats of violence.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant
 ** = High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

Summary:

The students, teachers and principal generally agree that high risk groups are a problem in the school.

Responses imply that broad cultural differences exist and that the wide range of student value systems conflicts.

Conclusions:

It is not surprising that a number of groups at risk were identified by teachers and the principal as problems in this school, nor, is it surprising at this point that students also recognize some of the same problems.

It seems that the students were able to be more realistic about their problems when the behavior was broken down into specifics, than when presented in more general terms as in section B. This would suggest that they would be more able to work on behavior change when the behaviors are more specifically identified and specific objectives for change are developed.

The specific behaviors listed as problems are:

- (1) Underachievement
- (2) Cheating
- (3) Cutting classes
- (4) Absenteeism
- (5) Theft
- (6) Violence or threats of violence
- (7) Students who speak non-standard English

The indications here may be that the problem is more a matter of finding an approach to behavior change than simply identifying the problem behaviors exhibited by the students.

The indications are that the present approach used is not meeting the expectations of the teachers, students or principal. If this is true, the approach should be to select a new method of intervention and remediation. A change of intervention will require:

- (1) Investigation and selection of a method
- (2) Staff training in the new methodology
- (3) Organizational changes to fit the new intervention method
- (4) Possible program revision (and possibly other changes).

I. Area IX - Community Characteristics (Refer to Table I)

This section is designed to identify features and aspects of the community that the school community feels may be helpful or damaging to the school environment.

The staff rated this section generally in the average to high neutral level. The average mean for the eight items was 3.29 with an average T-score of 59.3.

There were only two items on the student survey for this section, which were rated at the neutral level.

The principal's report reflected a similar attitude toward the community as a whole.

No major problem areas were identified by any component reporting on this section.

Conclusion:

There are no problems indicated in this section other than a possible lack of concern for the problems of schools by the general public. The responses on the surveys do not place a great deal of importance on this issue. If this feeling is correct, the impact is probably not as great as some other problems identified in this survey.

J. Area X - School Features (Refer to Table J)

This section was designed to identify features of the school that might contribute to the functional level of the school in an adverse or constructive manner.

The staff rated six of the eleven items at the critical problem level, three at the low neutral level, and two at the high neutral level. No items were rated at the positive level. The average mean for the eleven items was 2.54, with an average T-score of 29.7. This places the average rating at the critical problem level for the total section.

The students rated the section with an average mean of 3.47 and an average T-score of 51.9, or at the high average level. This indicates some disagreement in the way staff and students view the school environment.

Area IX Community Characteristics

Table I

Staff			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
52	3.08	N	48
53	2.65	N	33
54	3.32	N	56
55	3.11	N	49
56	3.14	N	50
57	3.62	N	66
58	4.11	+	82
59	3.30	N	55
AVE	3.29	N	55

Students			
Item	Item Means	$\frac{+}{N}$	T Score
-	-		-
40	3.24	N	46
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
-	-		-
41	3.73	N	68
-	-		-
AVE	3.49	N	57

Staff

Is this a problem in your school?

52. Changing neighborhood characteristics.

53. Ethnic tensions

54. Student poverty

55. Student health

56. Changing composition of student body

57. Transient students.

** 58. Bussing

59. Divisive community influences

Students

Is this a problem in your school?

40. Ethnic tensions

41. Bussing to improve racial balance.

+ = T - 70 and up - High significance level for strengths.

- = T - 30 + down - High significance level for potential problems.

N = T - 31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - not significant.

** = High significance - strength.

* = High significance - problems.

The principal's report rated most items on this section as adequate, however, he indicated dissatisfaction with the alternatives for discipline and control, and class size.

The staff rated items dealing with "discipline," "dress code," "inadequate programs for gifted students," "inadequate remedial services," "inadequate medical services," and "poor physical facilities" at the critical problem level. Items dealing with "inadequate counseling services," "teachers turnover" and "class size" were rated at the low neutral level, bordering on the critical problem level. Items dealing with "irrelevant curriculum" and "teacher absenteeism" were rated above T-score 50, indicating no problem.

The students rated only one item as a critical problem level, "dress code," probably for a different reason than the staff. They rated items dealing with "discipline," "useless courses" and "poor physical facilities" at the low neutral level. "Teacher absenteeism," and "not enough medical services" were rated at the high neutral level; "not enough counseling" and "class size" were rated at the positive level.

There were degrees of agreement between students, principal and staff on this section. All seem to consider "discipline" a feature that is at, or near, the critical problem level.

"Dress code" also is rated at the critical problem level by both students and staff. The principal indicates problems with enforcement of the present code.

"Physical facilities" are obviously a handicap to school operation. The areas of disagreement have to do with "class size," "counseling services," and "inadequate medical services."

This section holds some potential problem areas that need consideration.

Conclusions:

It is apparent that the building and outside space for activities limit the staff and administration in program development, but will have to be accepted as an unchangeable item with no alternative for the present, at least.

AREA X School Features

TABLE J

Staff			
Item	Item Means	+ - N	T- Score
60	1.89	-	8
61	2.24	-	20
62	3.38	N	58
63	2.30	-	22
64	2.43	-	26
65	2.70	N	35
66	2.46	-	27
67	2.62	N	32
68	3.19	N	51
69	2.11	-	15
70	2.65	N	33
AVE	2.54	-	29.7

Staff Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- *60. Discipline
- *61. Dress Code
- 62. Irrelevant curriculum
- *63. Inadequate programs for gifted students
- *64. Inadequate remedial services
- 65. Inadequate counseling services
- *66. Inadequate medical services
- 67. Teacher turnover
- 68. Teacher absenteeism
- *69. Poor physical facilities
- 70. Class size.

Students			
Item	Item Means	+ - N	T- Score
42	3.00	N	35
43	2.90	-	30
44	3.24	N	46
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
45	4.10	+	85
46	3.41	N	54
-	-	-	-
47	4.34	N	60
48	2.93	N	32
49	3.83	+	73
AVE	3.47	N	51.9

Student Items

Is this a problem in your school?

- 42. Discipline
- *43. Dress Code
- 44. Useless courses
- **45. Not enough counseling
- 46. Not enough medical services
- 47. Teacher absenteeism
- 48. Poor physical facilities
- **49. Class size

+ = T-70 and up - High significance level for strengths
 - = T-30 + down - High significance level for potential problems
 N = T-31 - T - 69 High and low neutral level - Not significant
 ** = High significance - strength
 * = High significance - problems

In the area of services and curriculum -- medical, remedial and programs for gifted children -- appear to be the problem areas from the staff viewpoint. However, specifics are not called for in this survey. An investigation of the specific reasons for the ratings by the staff should be made to determine what changes could be accomplished within the capabilities of the school.

The two other items -- discipline and dress code -- may be considered related, and have been referred to by all three reporting components. As has been indicated in another section of this report, there is dissatisfaction with the present disciplinary situation, possibly with the procedures and the methodology. These indications should be taken into consideration in the specification of problems and recommendations.

VI. COMPOSITE OF AREAS

A. Staff responses

1. Strong points

The staff rated 19 items as strong points of the school (see following list of strong points for T-score values and ranking).

The highest rated items deal with the rapport, cooperation, and positive relationships that exist between the principal and his staff. The next highest area deals with staff to staff relationships, which indicates a good relationship between teachers of the school and that the principal-staff relationship is very good. There are several items that deal with the teachers' relationships with students, indicating that the staff feels that it reacts in a professional, empathic and consistent manner to the students.

2. Potential problems

The staff rated 19 items as potential problems in the school. Most of these items were in the area of student behavior and characteristics: academic, social and emotional. Other items rated at the critical problem level deal with discipline and control factors; cultural and ethnic differences; inadequate physical facilities and lack of special services.

B. Student responses

1. Strong points

The students rated 11 items as strong points of the school. The highest rated items deal with the teacher-teacher relations, principal-student relations, the enthusiasm of teachers toward their profession, the counseling program, and parent-teacher relationships. There were no items dealing with teacher-student relationships. One item indicated students show good school spirit.

2. Potential problems

The students listed 10 items as potential problems in the school. Four of the items deal with student-teacher relationships, five deal with student social behaviors, and one with "dress code."

C. Principal's report

1. The principal was asked, during the consultant's interview, "In summary, what do you see as the most pressing needs and problems of this school?"

- a. Socialization of students, including a better understanding between blacks and whites.
- b. Parental concern for student achievement.
- c. Improved communication between school and community.
- d. Need more black teachers.
- e. Limited playground space; also parking space needs to be expanded.

2. What do you see as the greatest strengths of this school?

- a. A high percentage of experienced teachers.
- b. Pride of the students in the activity program.
- c. Special programs for slow learners and underachieving students.
- d. Success of the athletic program.
- e. Central office and patron support.
- f. Cooperation of community agencies.
- g. A variety of course offerings.

STAFF - STRONG POINTS

High	T-Score	Item
+	107	25. The way the principal gets along with the teachers.
+	107	26. The way the principal handles staff conflict.
+	97	27. Getting cooperation and support from the non-teaching staff (administrators, secretaries, custodians, etc.)
+	97	30. The educational policies and practices advocated by the principal.
+	97	19. The way the principal gets along with the students.
+	94	28. Pressure from the administration on the teachers to conform to traditional models of teacher behavior.
+	94	14. Disagreements among the staff on the proper educational goals for the school.
+	92	18. Older teachers who are reluctant to accept newer teachers as colleagues.
+	90	29. The way the principal evaluates teachers' performance.
+	88	13. Teachers who don't get along with the other teachers.
+	87	10. Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades.
+	82	58. Bussing.
+	81	11. Teachers who don't seem to be consistent in the way they grade student work.
+	81	12. Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question.
+	78	15. Disagreements among the staff on the proper balance between traditional and innovative approaches to teaching.
+	73	9. Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and educational problems of their students.
+	70	16. Teachers who seem bored with teaching.
+	70	17. Teachers with little interest in increasing their professional competence and improving their teaching.
+	70	20. Rules for students that put obedience and orderliness ahead of freedom and individuality.

STAFF - POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Low High	T-Score	Item
-	-7	49. Profanity
--	4	37. Underachievement
-	5	5. The number of students who lack self-confidence, ambition or interest in school.
-	8	60. Discipline
-	8	2. The number of students who are emotionally immature or are behavior problems
-	11	39. Cutting class
-	12	40. Absenteeism
-	15	69. Poor physical facilities
-	17	38. Cheating
--	19	3. Large differences in the backgrounds of the students; social, ethnic or economic
-	20	61. Dress code
-	21	50. Violence or threats of violence
-	21	33. Lack of community interest in the schools
-	22	43. Theft
-	22	51. Students who speak non-standard English
-	22	63. Inadequate programs for gifted students
-	25	4. Friction or hostility between groups of students
-	26	64. Inadequate remedial services
-	27	66. Inadequate medical services

STUDENTS - STRONG POINTS

<i>High</i>	<i>T-Score</i>	<i>Item</i>
		Is this a problem in your school?
+	106	19. Teachers who don't get along with the other teachers.
+	94	5. Unfair treatment of students by the principal or the people in his office.
+	88	3. Getting the students to show some school spirit.
+	85	20. Teachers who seem bored with teaching.
+	85	22. The way the principal gets along with the students.
+	85	45. Not enough counseling.
+	83	36. Drugs.
+	81	1. Finding subjects that you need and like.
+	76	26. The way the teachers get along with the parents of their students.
+	76	37. Alcohol.
+	73	49. Class size.

STUDENTS - POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Low High	T-Score	Item
		Is this a problem in your school?
-	-10	14. Do the respect teachers; and students have for one another.
-	-3	31. Cutting class.
-	16	35. Theft.
-	18	39. Violence or threats of violence.
-	20	4. Disorder, noise and general confusion in the halls and classrooms.
-	20	30. Cheating.
-	20	16. Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades.
-	21	18. Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question.
-	23	21. Teachers who are usually boring.
-	30	43. Dress code.

D. Summary of Areas. (See chart)

1. Staff

The staff rated three areas below T-score 30, the critical problem cut-off; (1) student characteristics and relationships; (2) groups at risk, (3) school features.

They rated three areas in the neutral range, T-score 31 through T-score 69. (1) Teacher-teacher relationships; (2) school community relationships; (3) community characteristics.

2. Students

The students rated no items below T-score 30, the critical problem level; one area above T-score 70; teacher characteristics and relationships. They rated eight areas at the neutral level, T-score 31-69.

3. Comparison of Staff and Student Area Responses

The area of greatest disagreement was Student-Teacher relationships. The students rated it at T-score 30.8, almost in the critical problem range, while the staff rated it at T-score 68.3, almost in the strong point range. This would indicate an interpersonal communication problem between teachers and students. It would also indicate that the students feel more strongly about the relationship than the staff realizes.

VII. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This school has a wide spread of socioeconomic deficiencies, with a polarization of the groups on either end of the continuum and less in the middle group, causing a heavy conflict between the groups at the level of social and interpersonal skills. This could also account for some of the self-confidence problems.

A. Problems

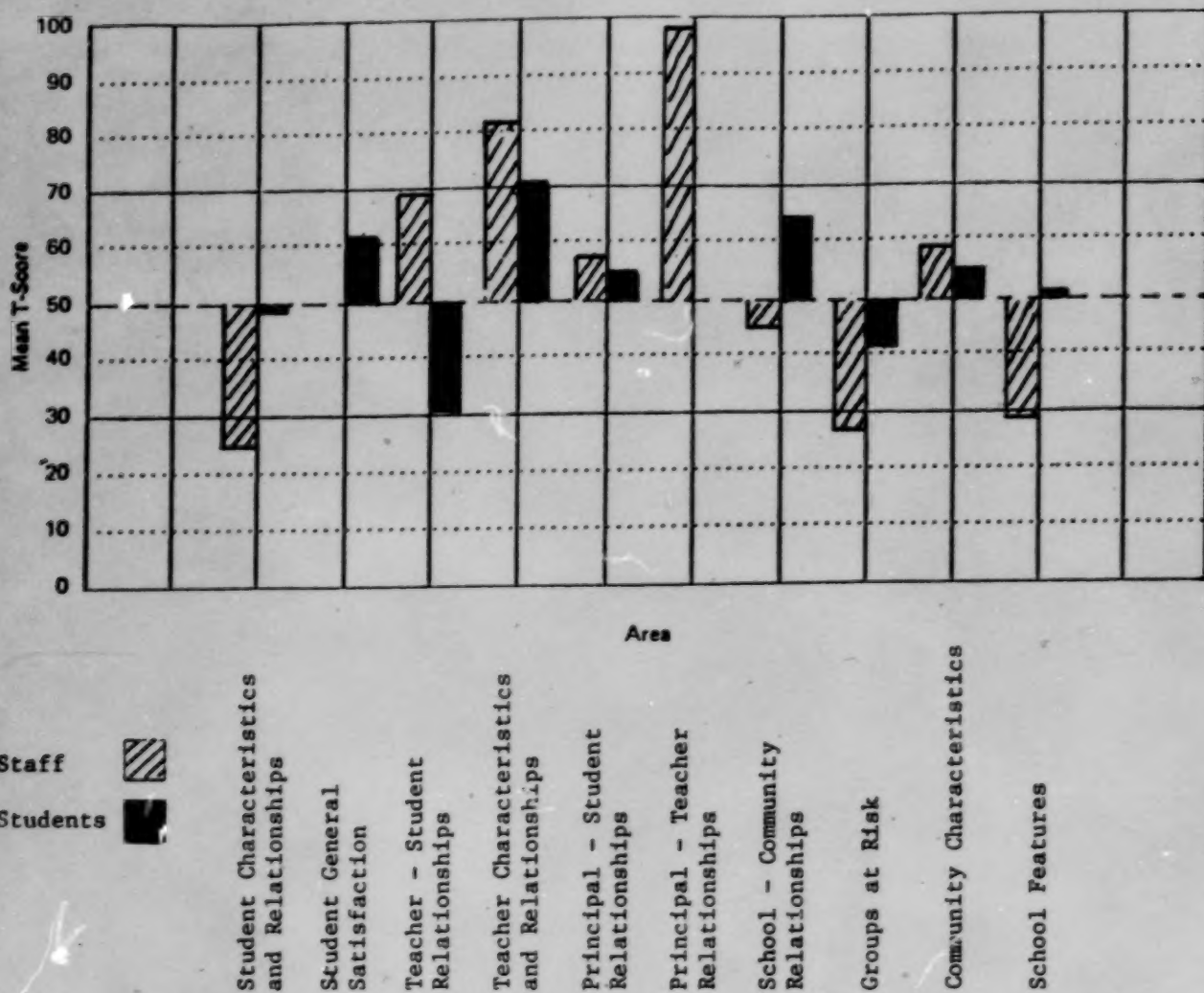
The problems that seem most outstanding seem to revolve around three areas:

- (1) Student-student relationships and characteristics;
- (2) Student-teacher relationships; and
- (3) Organizational and management problems.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile

School _____

Date _____



1. Student-student relationships

The problems in this area seem to revolve around interpersonal relationships that are caused by socioeconomic differences and lack of interpersonal skills development.

2. Student-teacher relationships.

The problems in this area seem to be interpersonal in nature, also. The students seem to be hostile toward teachers, either openly aggressive or in a passive-aggressive way, which in either case causes a great deal of disruption in the school. Indications are that much of this is based on distrust and feelings of non-support by the students, which may be unwarranted, but the feelings exist nevertheless.

3. Organizational and management problems.

There are a number of indications that there is concern by all three components of the school that the organizational and management structure in the general area of discipline needs to be reviewed and new alternatives developed.

B. Recommendations

The three problem areas identified by the survey deal with interpersonal relationships and process development. Intervention into these problems, therefore, should focus on program planning and development that will aid in prevention of the interpersonal conflicts or management of conflicts that cannot be prevented.

The first phase in planning for a joint effort between the Center and the school will be a meeting between the administrative personnel of the school system and Center personnel to establish a cooperative plan of action aimed at the problem areas already identified and any others that may be specified in the group meeting.

The second phase would be implementation of specific activities developed in the first phase meeting.

The first phase should be implemented during the month of July if possible to allow for specific planning for the 1974-75 school year.

A VALIDITY STUDY OF THE SCHOOL PROBLEM AREA SURVEY

Problem Area Survey for Students

Gary Morrow, Ph.D., Instructor and Fellow in Medicine
Gerald Rubenstein, Ed.D., Director, Consultation and Education
University of Rochester Medical Center

Abstract

In order to assess the validity of the a priori rational factor structure of the School Problem Area Survey for Students, a Principal Components Analysis was carried out on data obtained from a stratified sample of 171 students from a suburban high school. Examination of the resultant factor structure provided general support of the validity of the original rational factor structure along with specific support for a number of the originally conceived groupings of questions. An alternative conceptual schema for analyzing this questionnaire is presented along with the statistical results of the study.

Introduction

An important criteria for assessing the usefulness of a measurement instrument containing sub-scales or sub-groupings of items that are to be combined together for analysis is that there is some degree of reasonableness or validity to the sub-groupings. A familiar example of this principle would be the MMPI where individual questions are combined into scales and these scales are then used to generate a pattern for analysis. The important point is that answers to individual questions are not added up in some manner and then analyzed as a total score, but rather that the individual questions are combined into groups of questions and it is the pattern of scores from these groups that is examined and interpreted. A key assumption in this process is that the questions combined into a given group are either similar in nature or are assessing a common attribute, concept or theme.

The questionnaire developed by the Human Resources Research Organization (HumRRO) for assessing problem areas as part of their procedure for surveying school problems (Taylor, Vineberg, and Goffard, 1974) is an example of this type of measurement instrument. The student version of this instrument contains 49 questions concerning student perceptions of potential problem areas or areas of conflict within and among various elements of a student's school environment. Based largely on a general systems model, these 49 separate questions have been grouped into ten areas ranging from students' perceptions of "School Attractiveness" to their perceptions of "Facility Problems." These rational groupings were made on the basis of the professional judgment of the developers of the instruments and, as such, represent a reasonable first approach to the problem of combining the individual questions into more understandable and useful categories for analysis. Questions that appeared to go together were grouped under each of the ten initial categories. This procedure gave the instrument an initial measure of face validity, i.e., it seemed to measure what it purported to.

A next logical step in the development would be a statistical examination of how well these initial groupings are supported by data gathered through using the questionnaire. This paper reports on this next logical step and the statistical analysis used to critically examine the validity of the ten sub-groupings employed to score the School Problem Area Survey for Students.¹

The purpose then of this study was to statistically assess the degree to which the individual questions on the School Problem Area Survey could be combined into the scoring categories originally proposed, or if in fact, there is some more logical or statistically valid procedure for grouping them.

¹Copies of the factor analytic structure of the staff version of the School Problem Area Survey may be obtained from the authors:

University of Rochester Medical Center
Strong Memorial Hospital
Department of Psychiatry - Division of Psychology
300 Crittenden Boulevard
Rochester, New York 14642

Method

The data for analysis were gathered by administering the student version of the School Problem Area Survey to a carefully stratified random sample of high school age students (grades 9-12) from a suburban school in Rochester, New York. The 171 completed questionnaires returned were considered to be an adequate representation of the over 2,500 students in the school. In order to increase the validity of the responses, special precautions were taken to ensure the anonymity of student questionnaires. Questionnaires were passed out and collected by research personnel affiliated with the study and coded only the stratification criteria. Data were then keypunched in a standard format for computer analysis.

The statistical procedure selected as most applicable to the aim of the study was Principal Components Analysis (Cooley & Lohnes, 1971). This technique is a slight modification of the familiar Factor Analysis (Harman, 1967). As with Factor Analysis, Principal Components Analysis is a robust statistical technique that is ideally suited for investigating the underlying structure of a measuring instrument such as the School Problem Area Survey, for it reveals the manner in which responses to individual questions tend to group together. This grouping together is commonly referred to as the factor structure and is a measure of both the number of sub-groups (factors within the questionnaire and the degree to which each individual question within a factor is correlated with that factor. This latter measure is called the Factor Loading and can be viewed as the correlation or degree or relatedness between a separate question and its sub-group factor. (As with correlation coefficients, it may have a range of values from -1.00 which represents complete dissimilarity to +1.00 which represents complete similarity or correlation.)

In keeping with commonly accepted practice, the following stringent criteria were employed for assigning an individual question to a given factor: (1) the factor loading, or correlation, between the question and the factor was greater than .50, (2) the question did not correlate better than .35 with any other factor, and (3) the question content was judged appropriate for that factor.

When interpreting the usefulness and generalizeability of the results presented below, the purpose of this study should be kept in mind: to statistically assess the reasonableness or validity of the scoring categories which were selected a priori, and/or examine any new statistically valid factors which might emerge. These results are based on data from a carefully drawn large sample representative of over 2,500 students in a suburban school and as such may, or may not, be representative of what might be found in other schools in which the questionnaires might be used. As with all factor analytic investigations of the underlying structure of a questionnaire, the generalizeability of these results depends on replications with diverse samples.

Results

Factor Structure:

Eight factors emerged from the Principal Components Analysis which accounted for 51% of the total variance (an earlier analysis was carried out based on 10 factors in an attempt to duplicate the original groupings for the survey, but the resultant structure was considered inadequate due to the confused and difficult to interpret factor structure and because of the high number of questions that did not meet the criteria for inclusion with a factor). Over 2/3 (34 of 49) of the questions on the survey were significantly associated with only one of the eight factors. Tables 1 through 8 below present the factors which emerged as a result of a Kaiser Varimax Rotation (Kaiser, 1960) in order to maximize differences following the Principal Components Analysis. The number of each question along with its factor loading is given in addition to the original scoring category to which the item was thought to belong. For example, the first question in Table 1 is number 17 from the survey (the degree to which "Teachers who don't seem to be consistent in the way they grade your work" is seen as a problem by students); it correlated .69 (the factor loading) with the factor, and originally was thought to group under "Teacher-Student Relationships" (TS).

TABLE 1

Factor 1

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
17	.69	TS
18	.64	TS
15	.62	TS
16	.59	TS
20	.58	TT
14	.55	TS

TABLE 2

Factor II

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
35	.72	SP
34	.71	SP
31	.66	SP
33	.63	SP
30	.59	SP
32	.53	SP
39	.52	SP

TABLE 3

Factor III

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
25	.73	PS
22	.67	PS
26	.63	PS
23	.61	PS
27	.52	PS

TABLE 4

Factor IV

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
2	.67	SA
10	.54	SS
49	.53	FP
3	.50	SA

TABLE 5

Factor V

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
11	.71	SS
8	.56	SS
12	.50	SS

TABLE 6

Factor VI

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
41	.72	CP
9	.68	TS
40	.58	SP

TABLE 7

Factor VII

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
37	.78	SP
36	.71	SP

TABLE 8

Factor VIII

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Factor Loading</u>	<u>Original Category</u>
1	.63	SA
45	.54	AP
44	.52	AP

In addition to examining the factor structure, or systematic groupings of an instrument, it is often of interest to examine the questions from the instrument that failed to demonstrate a significant association with any of the factors. Table 9 presents those questions from the student survey that were not significantly associated with any one individual factor. This is to say that they did not appear to be preferentially associated with one individual factor, but rather may have shown factor loadings on two or more factors, and thus could not be grouped (according to the criteria used) under a single factor. The number of each question is given along with the original group to which the question was thought to apply. The final column in the Table summarizes the number of questions that failed to appear in the factor structure by each of the original groupings. For example, questions number 4, 5 and 6 originally grouped under "School Attractiveness" (SA) failed to be included in the factor structure. In the original grouping, there were six questions under the "School Attractiveness" category, and thus 3 of 6 questions were not included. Those summary categories where one-half or more of the original questions failed to group with a factor have been underlined.

TABLE 9

Questions Not Included in Factor Structure

<u>Question Number</u>	<u>Original Grouping</u>	<u>Number of Questions From Original Grouping Not Included in Factor Structure</u>
4	SA	
5	SA	
6	SA	<u>3 of 6</u>
7	SS	<u>1 of 6</u>
13	TS	<u>1 of 6</u>
19	TT	
21	TT	<u>2 of 3</u>
24	PS	<u>1 of 6</u>
28	SC	
29	SC	<u>2 of 2</u>
38	SP	<u>1 of 11</u>
42	CP	<u>1 of 2</u>
43	AP	
46	AP	
47	AP	<u>3 of 5</u>
48	FP	<u>1 of 2</u>

Examination of the factor structure of the student version of the School Problem Area Survey provides, in the main, general support for the original rational factor structure developed by its authors. Specific support is also provided for a number of the originally conceived groupings. As detailed in Tables 1 through 8, factors emerged that paralleled quite closely four of the original groupings.

More specifically, Factor V matches the groupings of "Student Characteristics and Relationships" (SS) with three of the original six questions showing a close association to the factor.

Factor I is virtually identical to the original grouping of "Teacher-Student Relationships" (TS) with five of the six original questions showing a strong association with the factor.

In a similar fashion, Factor III is virtually identical to the grouping "Principal-Student Relationships" (PS) with five of the six original questions highly correlated with the factor.

The grouping of "Student Problems" (SP) was supported by the resultant factor structure, but it appeared that there are potentially two divisions within this grouping. Factor II contained seven of the original eleven questions, while Factor VII revealed a separate grouping of two questions. By inspection it seems that the first grouping (Factor II) describes what might be viewed as lesser order problems such as theft (#35), vandalism (#34), cutting class (#31), dropouts (#33), cheating (#30), absenteeism (#32), and profanity (#39) when compared to the second grouping (Factor VII) alcohol (#37) and drugs (#36).

Five of the remaining six originally conceived groupings were not supported by the data. As several of the five were constructed from very few items this finding is not unexpected. More specifically:

The grouping of questions under "Social Attractiveness" (SA) was unsupported, with three of the original six questions failing to associate with any single factor and the remaining three being widely dispersed among factors with no clear pattern of associations.

Two of the three original questions under the grouping "Teacher Characteristics and Relationships" (TT) failed to demonstrate a significant association with any factor (Table 9).

Both questions from "School Community Relationships" (SC) were not significantly associated with any factor.

One of the two questions under "Community Problems" (CP) failed to associate with a given factor.

One of the two questions under "Facility Problems" (FP), was not associated with any factor.

The grouping of questions under "Administrator Problems" (AP) received a degree of support in that there was a clear association between two of the questions and Factor VIII, thus indicating the possibility that this grouping is, in fact, a logical one that requires

the addition of different questions to replace the three (#43, 46, 47) that failed to load on any factor.

Discussion

These data appear to support, in the main, the utility of the School Problem Area Survey for students. The majority of the 49 questions included in the survey demonstrated a significant association to a factor structure that was seen to closely match the original conceptualization upon which the survey was based. Minor difficulties were noted with several of the original groupings of questions. However, it is probable that the alteration or addition of different questions to the survey in place of those questions not associated with any grouping will successfully solve the difficulties uncovered.

On the basis of the factor structure revealed through analysis of these data, it is possible to offer an alternative conceptualization for viewing the results obtained from the survey. At present, this alternative interpretation can only be realistically viewed as tentative, due to the fact that the data may have limited generalizeability. In addition to demonstrating the flexibility of the School Problem Area Survey in terms of its ability to be interpreted in alternative frameworks, it is hoped that the presentation of this conceptualization will act to prompt further research and replication of this study with additional items and schools.

The eight factors revealed in this study can be logically placed into a conceptual framework that postulates three areas of concern to students:

- A. Relations to Peer Groups
- B. Perceptions of Teachers
- C. School Environment

The various questions from the survey that appear to fit within this framework (along with sub-groupings within the general groupings) are shown below. Under each of the main elements of the conceptual framework are given the number of the factor(s) (from Tables 1 - 8) that can be logically grouped under each element of the conceptual structure, a summary of where the individual questions originally were thought to group, a brief descriptive explanation of why the

particular factor(s) may be grouped where it is, and the number and content of each question from the survey that was shown to be significantly associated with the factor.

Factor Analytic Structure of the School Problem Area Survey - Students

A. Relations to Peer Group

1. Student Problems - Major

FACTOR VII - 2 items from "Student Problems" (SP)

This factor suggests that students see a set of student problems as distinct from other problems. It is probable that these two problem areas are seen as more serious than those included below.

37. Alcohol (SP)

36. Drugs (SP)

2. Student Problems - Minor

FACTOR II - 7 items all from "Student Problems" (SP)

This factor also describes student problems which appear to be a lesser order concern than those of Factor VII.

35. Theft (SP)

30. Cheating (SP)

34. Vandalism (SP)

32. Absenteeism (SP)

31. Cutting Class (SP)

39. Profanity (SP)

33. Dropouts (SP)

3. Student Autonomy/Control

FACTOR III - 6 items all from "Principal/Student" (PS)

This factor reflects student concern about degree to which they can control the nature of the school environment.

25. The amount of influence student opinion has on the way the school is run. (PS)

22. The way the principal gets along with the students. (PS)

26. The way students are assigned to classes, graded, and promoted. (PS)

23. A feeling in the school that conformity and orderliness among the students are more important than freedom and individuality. (PS)

27. Unfair treatment of students by the principal or by the people in his office. (PS)

24. Rules for students that are not clear but are vague and indefinite. (PS)

4. Student Apathy

FACTOR V - 3 items

3 out of 6 from "Student/Student" (SS)

This factor suggests student concern for the withdrawn, isolated, "internalizing" student.

- 11. Capable students who feel that going to school is pretty much a waste of time. (SS)
- 8. The number of students who don't like going to school and don't do their school work. (SS)
- 12. The number of students who don't seem to do much with other students - who are "loners". (SS)

5. Student-Body Differences

FACTOR VI - 3 items

1 out of 2 from "Community-Problems" (CP)

1 out of 6 from "Student/Student" (SS)

1 out of 11 from "Student Problems" (SP)

This factor effectively brings together ethnic differences and the threat of violence. One way students are being seen in this high school is in terms of ethnic background and such differences are possibly being fused with violence.

- 41. Ethnic tensions. (CP)
- 9. Students from ethnic minorities. (SS)
- 40. Violence or threats of violence. (SP)

B. Perceptions of Teachers

FACTOR I - 6 items

5 out of 6 from "Teacher/Student" (TS)

1 out of 3 from "Teacher/Teacher" (TT)

This factor leans heavily upon the student's perceptions of teachers in relation to students and the faculty's influence on how the school is managed.

- 17. Unfair treatment of students by teachers. (TS)
- 18. Teachers who won't admit making mistakes or think there is only one right answer to every question. (TS)
- 15. Teachers who don't seem to care about the personal and education problems of their students. (TS)
- 16. Teachers who put too much pressure on their students to get good grades. (TS)
- 20. Teachers who seemed bored with teaching. (TT)
- 14. The respect teachers and students have for one another. (TS)

C. School Environment

1. Flexibility

FACTOR VIII - 3 items

- 1 out of 6 from "School Attractiveness" (SA)
- 2 out of 3 from "Administration Problems" (AP)

This factor describes the amount of choice students have.

- 1. Not enough school subjects to choose from. (SA)
- 45. Useless courses. (AP)
- 44. Dress code. (AP)
- 2. Generalized Concerns about the Psycho/Social/Physical Climate and Plant

FACTOR IV - 4 items

- 2 out of 6 from "School Attractiveness" (SA)
- 1 out of 2 from "Facility Problem" (FP)
- 1 out of 6 from "Student/Student" (SS)

This generalized item suggests that students "see" the relationship between behavior and environment.

- 2. Not enough extracurricular activities. (SA)
- 10. Friction or hostility between groups of students. (SS)
- 49. Class size. (FP)
- 3. Getting the students to show some school spirit. (SA)

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PART II

TWO SURVEYS IN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

SCHOOL A

Robert Beidler, MSW¹
Clinic Director of Alcoholism Services
The Northwest Center, Pennsylvania

Introduction

The Northwest Center conducted field trials in two schools, both of which can be considered alternative schools for the same community. School A is an alternative high school within the Public School System of Philadelphia; School B is a parish school within the Philadelphia Archdiocesan Catholic School System. It is important to note that the Catholic Schools of Philadelphia were developed in the Philadelphia Archdiocese as an alternative "public"/free school system. As such they are distinguished from private schools in that they are committed to mass education within the Catholic "cultural" viewpoint.

Description of School and Community

Northwest Philadelphia is composed of three distinct clusters of communities. (1) The Roxborough, Andorra, Manayunk, Wissahickon, Lower East Falls cluster on the Southwest side of the Northwest is predominantly working class Irish, Polish, and Italian Catholic. These communities are well established. Most of the adults were born and raised there, or were part of a mass migration from another part of North Philadelphia. (2) The Northeastern section: West Oak Lane, Erlen, and Wadsworth, has recently changed from a predominantly Jewish and Catholic working class/middle class community to an almost entirely black working class community with lower class pockets. (3) The central section of Northwest Philadelphia is very different from the two already described areas. This section consists

¹The survey reported here was carried out by a consultant other than the author.

of Germantown, Mt. Airy, and Chestnut Hill.

Germantown and Chestnut Hill were colonial commercial centers which became our nation's first affluent suburbs during the beginning of the nineteenth century. After the Revolution, Germantown developed into a dual community - a working class mill town of the East Side of Germantown Avenue and an affluent suburban community of the West Side. Chestnut Hill on the other hand never developed an industrial base, it was and remains an old line wealthy preserve. Mt. Airy lies between Chestnut Hill and Germantown and is nothing more than the later suburban expansion of Germantown.

Northwest Philadelphia has become an extremely complex aggregate of communities, the statistics of which are misleading. For instance the community is 50% black and 50% white, but does not necessarily mean poor or educationally deprived and white most definitely does not mean middle class suburban or urban working class. The adult population has the highest average educational level in the Metropolitan area, yet the percentage of individuals who have not completed high school is also high. The average income is highest in the city; yet Northwest Philadelphia's ranking for level of poverty is high whereas other metropolitan areas designated non-poverty fill the bottom of the state's list. Furthermore, those with the highest educational levels are not necessarily in the highest income brackets.

The choice of schools is a major decision. For a while there was a commitment to public schools but this has waned. The public schools are still used by the lower income group (lower to middle income), which is disproportionately Black. The public elementary schools used are K through 8 - an anachronism which has been maintained through a community struggle.

Because parents can make a selection from many different kinds of schools, socio-economic status, intellectual interests, etc., will influence their choices. It should be noted therefore, that the socio-cultural backgrounds of the students in a particular school will tend to be more homogeneous than one would expect.

The subcommunities have been delineated to help the reader appreciate the complexity and uniqueness of the community. In a sense, Northwest Philadelphia is a melange of numerous community systems, which in some ways remain separate, in other ways intermesh, and in even other ways misinterpret each other.

Description of School A:

A is an alternative high school within the public school system of Philadelphia. It serves students who are in District Six of the school system, i.e. Northwest Philadelphia. This school is patterned upon a similar older school, also in Philadelphia, which was one of the nation's first schools without walls. Most of the city's major cultural institutions are located near the older school, as well as a number of scientific, political and business institutions. The school utilizes these resources for learning. Unfortunately, the major institutions available to the older school are not duplicated in the setting occupied by school A.

Students are organized in tutorial sections. Staff members are responsible for sections and for helping students plan their individual learning processes.

The school is about 50% black and 50% white. It is used as an alternative to three regular high schools in the Northwest. A certain community ambivalence is discernable. The school is chosen more often because it is the only fiscal or academically based alternative available.

Access to the School

The Mental Health Center first contacted the District Six Superintendent of Schools for access to a secondary school in Northwest Philadelphia. A middle school was chosen but after some preliminary contacts, was not able to participate. It was then that school A was contacted. The Center's school consultant was providing group process training for the school's staff.

Reception to the Proposed Survey

The consultant asked the director (as the principal is called) if she would be willing to cooperate. She agreed to do so as a "favor" but seems to have been somewhat confused. For example, she reported that she had been at this very new school for twenty-two years. She described the majority of

students as being from the inner city though the area the school serves is totally outside of the inner city. There are only a few small upper class sections that have not been affected by the black migration from North Philadelphia to Northwest Philadelphia during the past twenty years, yet the principal reported no rapid social changes.

Ease of Survey

The instruments were introduced to the principal in January 1975. The Demographic Information Form was completed in forty-five minutes a few days later. The questionnaire was completed by school staff in January 1975 in a half hour. The questionnaire was administered to eleventh and twelfth grade members of a tutorial section and was completed in one half hour.

Significant Factors - Questionnaires

It is significant to note that neither students nor staff stated concern, or interest, in school - community problems. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the school is an alternative one whose participants travel to the school from a variety of local communities.

Despite this factor, both staff (T-score "26") and student (T-score "21") express realistic concern about "ethnic tensions" within the program environment; this may reflect the aggregate concern of the communities represented.

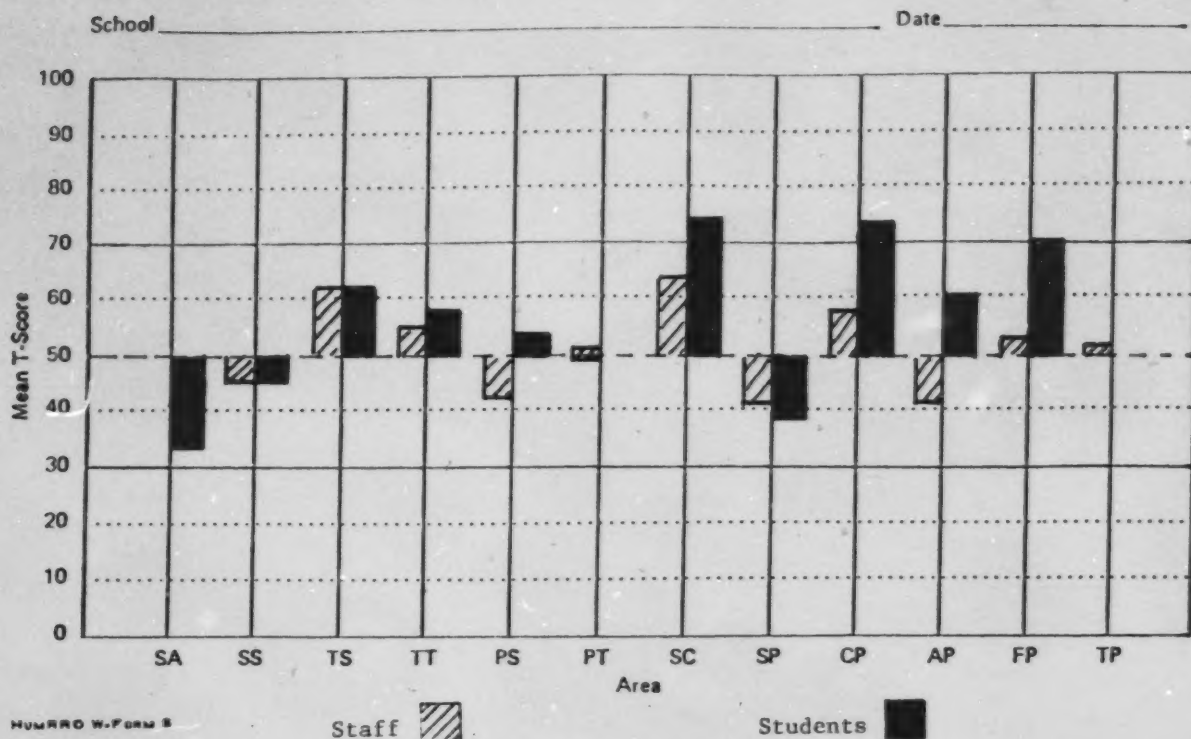
Student Problems of absenteeism were seen by both staff (T-score "19") and students (T-score "24") as of more concern than cutting class (Staff T-"4" and Student T-"7"). The Staff stated underachievement (T-19) as a problem. The number of students who don't like going to school and don't do their school work were of concern to staff (T-score "26") and to students (T-score "17").

The Staff only, showed real concern with loose or lax policies on student behavior which foster disorderliness and disorganization (T-score "22") and the absence of a school wide system for dealing with students who have special educational needs or problems (T-score "19"). Students express concern over the amount of influence student opinion has on the way the school is run (T-score "24").

Both staff and students consider medical services inadequate, (Staff, T-score "26", Student, T-score "35"); the staff would like to see more adequate programs for gifted students (T-score "11").

A graph of the mean T-scores for problem areas (items grouped into rational clusters) is shown as Figure 1.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



The areas shown here and in all subsequent reports vary slightly from those shown in the first school report (by Adams). They are:

- SA - School Attractiveness
- SS - School Characteristics and Relationships
- TS - Teacher-Student Relationships
- TT - Teacher Characteristics and Relationships
- PS - Principal-Student Relationships
- PT - Principal-Teacher Relationships
- SC - School-Community Relationships
- SP - Student Problems
- CP - Community Problems
- AP - Administrator Problems
- FP - Facility Problems
- TP - Teacher Problems

How It's Going

Shortly after the data were collected, the consultant left the Mental Health Center to continue studies at a university and no plans were made for intervention. A new consultant has joined the center and has reviewed the data.

She is enthused about the use of the instruments with schools as a help in assessing needs and as objectively-based instruments for the planning of an intervention. She has already shared the instruments with a few schools in Northwest Philadelphia and plans to attempt an application of the instruments during this school year.

REPORT ON A SCHOOL EXPERIENCING RACIAL STRIFE

Mrs. Joyce Dumars Green, Coordinator
Children's Mental Health Consultation
Mobile Mental Health Center, Alabama

Description of School and Community

This high school is located in a highly divergent, heterogeneous southern community along the Gulf Coast. There are more than 11 little "communities" that send students to this school. Communication between these groups is non-existent and reflects the strongly differing attitudes and values of the different communities. Thus, any alarming information spreads through these isolated groups rapidly.

The older part of town is typified by families who wanted to live in a rural setting. Now, the area is more a suburb of a large nearby city with still newer families being drawn from all over the United States by national companies moving into a new industrial complex.

Various community groups have formed to protect established values. The "Southerners" (used to denote a particular segment of the population) and the Klu Klux Klan have been very active in this area. Their real effects can only be estimated, but they are highly visible by means of traffic blocks for solicitation of funds, rallies, and frequent meetings that receive press coverage. The school finds these types of groups to be particularly difficult to deal with in terms of their influence with impressionable students. Black groups have started to organize to protect their position in the community and school. The result of this is defensiveness, hostility and feelings of depression.

The school is dependent on busing for 80% of the students. Few students drive their own cars to school; many children in the nearby black community walk. This curtails after-school participation in extra-curricular activities (which typically aids identification with a school). The result of this is little involvement in activities which can be meaningful in forming relationships that cut across community lines.

Ethnically the school is 83% white and 17% black. At the time the survey was completed 100 families were on welfare, but the principal felt that this was a low estimate of the number of students actually receiving

aid. Four hundred twenty-one students are currently on the free lunch program with many more needing service but having families who feel that accepting free food is demeaning. Many potential students are in private schools and in Christian Academies. These students come from families that are concerned about the violence and unrest in the public school.

In many cases the children attending the school are the first generation to complete high school. The principal reports that this is a great source of pride among the families and there is an effort made by these families to keep children in school. At the same time these families are in conflict about the social changes they see going on and their impact on the school.

The schools' physical layout makes it very difficult to administer with any degree of control. A public road cuts through the middle of the campus separating the main buildings from many older, free standing buildings and some portable classrooms. Sheriff's deputies are on duty during the day to help children across the street during class changes. This same street has served as a divider in racial conflicts, with black students lining up on one side and white students on the other and with the administrative staff in the middle trying to restore order.

One of the most difficult and well-publicized incidents of this sort required several Sheriff's deputies and seemed to increase the anger that the students were feeling.

Outsiders are able to gain easy admittance to the school without easy detection. Outsiders are often wandering around on campus and are involved in many of the conflicts that occur. A recent disturbance at a football game which hospitalized a few and involved some gun play was started by three persons who were no longer enrolled at the high school. However, the news reported this as student-incited activity.

Access to the School

The original contact with this school came at the inception of the Children's Mental Health Consultation Project offered by this Center.

Referral and crisis counseling services were utilized by this school under this project. Since children at high school level were not the focus of the special project grant, no steady consultation services were delivered. Following attendance at the HumRRO Workshop in which the survey instruments were introduced, the School Board was approached for permission to gather data at a school which would be able to utilize the data for intervention. The School Board's administrative staff decided that the school reported here would be the appropriate school in which to do the study. The schools that had utilized more extensive mental health consultation were rejected as unsuitable by the School Board Administrative staff.

The principal was enthusiastic about the opportunity to participate. The teaching staff, when approached, was apathetic. They participated without comment. It was agreed that a random sample of 50 tenth graders would be utilized and tenth grade teachers would also be screened.

Significant Factors -- Demographic Information Form

The educational problems of the school reflect the culturally deprived environment from which many of the students come. The principal reports that, of the 2069 students enrolled, there are 210 educable mentally retarded students with only 60 students enrolled in specialized programs. Four hundred thirty students are educationally handicapped and some of these are responding to the tensions and frustrations they encounter in the classroom by acting out. None of these students are in special programs. One hundred twenty students have been identified, on standardized achievement tests, as mentally gifted. There are no programs for the gifted located in any of the county schools. Thirty five students are on probation from Juvenile Court and 87 have been suspended from the school. Added to this are 150 who have been involved in drug abuse, 5 teen-age parents and 950 underachievers. One hundred twenty-five students dropped out of school in the past year; 5 received special help.

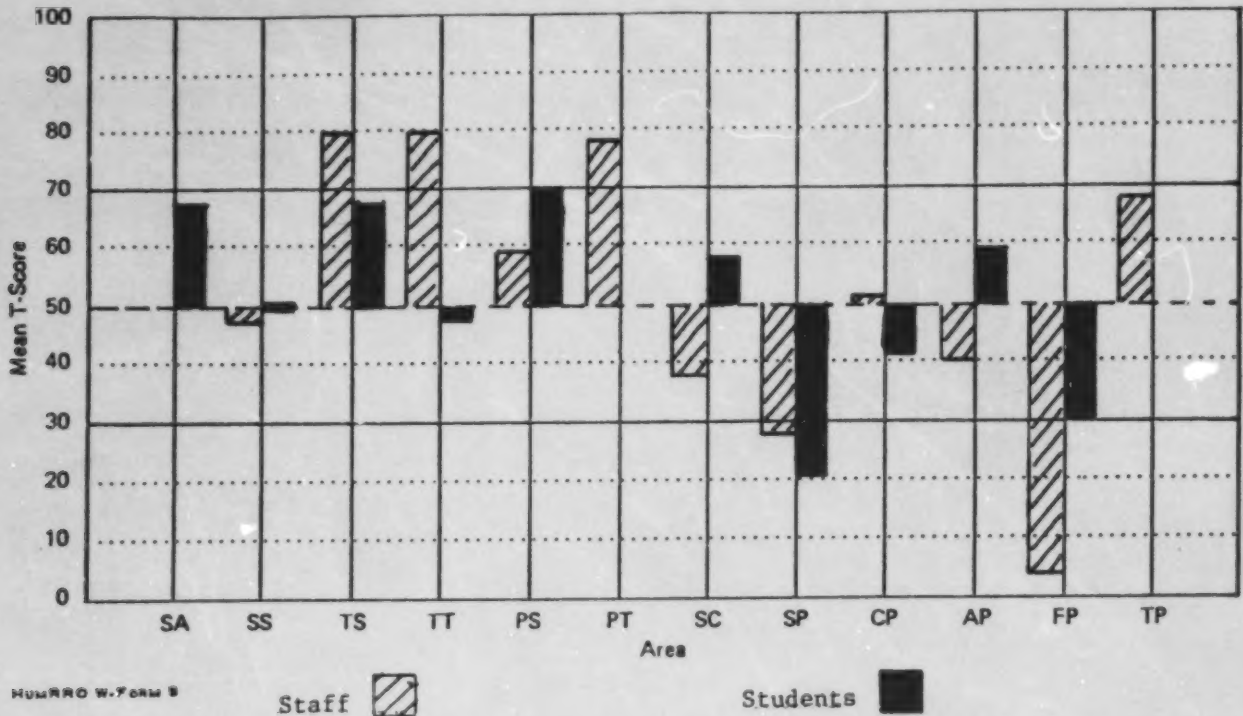
Another significant fact noted on the Demographic Information Form was that most of the faculty had taught more than six years in some school in the system. There were only four teachers who were in their first year of teaching. Thus, the school system and this school itself was capable of holding teachers they hired.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

The questionnaires revealed that the students and staff were quite similar in their positive and negative feelings about the school. (See Fig.)

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys - Profile

School _____ Date _____



Both felt that the principal was a definite asset, interacting well with students and teachers, and felt the need for structure in the classroom. On the negative side, the students tended to see student problems as more negative than the condition of the buildings and grounds. The teachers saw the physical facility as the most negative thing in their environment. This may be because the teacher's classroom is her office and she has a more well-defined feeling about it. The students identified several problems which the teachers did not see such as drugs, teachers who are boring, and some particular kinds of violence.

Reception of Data

The data were reviewed first with the School Board administrative staff and the principal. The principal reviewed the data with the staff and the students who participated in the survey. The mental health consultants were available at the meeting of the administrative staff and the teaching staff. The data were also reviewed by the student council of the school.

The school staff was very noncommittal in its response, had no questions about the meaning of the data and displayed no interest in implementing change. This is typical of teaching staff reaction to other surveys and also to the introduction of problem solving techniques in this school in the past.

Plans for Intervention

In the Spring of 1975, following another survey conducted by a consultant hired from out-of-state, similar findings evolved. The central office administrative staff then issued a statement for the news media with recommendations for intervention in the school's problems. These recommendations appear to be a combination of some suggested intervention techniques from both surveys and utilize central office staff and the school's guidance counselors as change agents. None of the recommendations have been implemented to date. The suggestions from the Board were:

- (1) "Organize a small bi-racial group meeting of students which will include outstanding students and those who are hostile. Pupil personnel counselors of the system might "rap" with these students.
- (2) Form small group meetings of teachers in an effort to unify the faculty as to what the problems really are.
- (3) Organize small bi-racial group meetings of parents to look into the real problems, help the problems surface and provide support for the school and the community in resolving the problems. The group should be composed of citizens who have cross-influence within the community.
- (4) Suspend those students who consistently create problems.
- (5) Provide assistance from pupil personnel counselors and increase additional administrative help to deal with discipline.

At this same time, the field trial of the survey instruments helped to make one major change in the school which should be of tremendous benefit. During the summer, a decision was made by the School Board to change the grade structure of the school from grades 7-12 to grades 9-12. Students who normally attended seventh and eighth grades are to be transferred to a middle school in the area.

This change was approved by the U.S. District Court; and the School Board said it felt that the change will "serve to provide a better educational program for middle school students. . . and at the same time will relieve the crowded conditions at the high school." Thus, if only to serve to identify specific problems and provide concrete non-personal action these data proved to be very helpful

Any kind of full scale intervention in the high school at this time is highly unlikely as the Mental Health Center's federal funding is being lessened each year and a match with local funds becomes more difficult to obtain. (Additionally, the Mental Health Center has no written agreement or any kind of understanding with the School Board. It is increasingly difficult to even get a commitment to start working on such an agreement from the schools.) Thus, many activities that could be carried out, such as organizing certain groups of students and working with guidance counselors, have not materialized. It is unfortunate that this has occurred because there was great potential in terms of the principal's interest in change. Perhaps this problem is not unique to this area and its school mental health consultation program.

In summary, though this is a field trial that produced little change in attitudes among the students, the teachers did receive some measure of satisfaction when two grades were removed from the school. It is likely to be a long time before these teachers risk involvement in controlling student behavior problems at a classroom level. The leadership of the principal is an important factor in controlling the many extraneous stresses confronting this school. The opportunity to survey this school's problems was a very valuable tool for him.

USING THE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS IN A NEW SCHOOL

Morton Flax, Ph.D., Director¹
Aurora Mental Health Center, Colorado

Description of School and Community

This school district is in an upper middle class area located in a suburban section of a major city of a mountain state. This district opened its first high school in 1966. At that time it was a four year high school with approximately 450 students. The total district population was around 3,500 students. Today less than ten years later, the school district has close to 14,000 students and the second high school was completed and opened in the fall of 1974 with only two grades - 9 and 10. Thus, the second school, the subject of this report, was brand new when the data were collected. Plans are to continue to add one grade level per year until all four grades in the curriculum are offered at this school.

The district itself is primarily a bedroom community with little or no identifiable industry or business. The majority of community residents have completed some college, and have the second highest per capita income in the state. Other than one small mountain school district, the district in this study spends more dollars per child than any other school district in the state. The support of the community towards its school programs is exemplified by the fact that since 1950 there have been approximately 15 bond issues. Not one bond issue has failed. Even though the school district is made up of a host of small towns, villages, and unincorporated areas, the community at large takes a great deal of pride in the schools.

There is a general feeling that the district has attempted to provide both an innovative and stimulating program for all the students. At the same time they have been sensitive to the needs of specific kinds of youngsters. As an example, in 1959 the school district established the first classroom for emotionally disturbed children in the state. This was considered one of the leading programs in the nation, and attracted national publicity. More recently, national publicity was again gained with the implementation of the open classroom - an individually guided education program - and the start of an all-year-round-school.

¹This study was conducted when Dr. Flax was on the staff at the Arapahoe Mental Health Center in Colorado.

Another variable which has affected the development of the school district in general, has been that the old aristocratic suburban section of the school district is no longer the main tax base of the district. This metropolitan area has rapidly expanded in the last 20 years and much of the growth has occurred in this district. One area that is served by the new school used to be part of the old dust bowl area of Colorado during the 30's. Today, it is filled with many tract homes, condominiums, town houses and apartment houses. There are very few areas where one can still see any farming taking place, or animals for other than recreational purposes.

The vast majority of students need transportation because of the rather large geographic area that the school covers. Only 10% are able to walk to school. The other 90% require busses or provide their own transportation. Driver's licenses are issued to 16 year olds who pass the test and consequently many students drive their own cars to school.

Access to the School

Initial contact was made through the Assistant Principal who worked primarily with the guidance counselors on discipline problems in the school. The project was discussed with him and the principal, who was new to the school district. The principal then asked for clearance from the district central office. I also called the Superintendent and forwarded an explanation and a copy of the student, staff, and demographic information forms. Approval was granted and time was then set aside by the principal to go ahead with the project.

The major difficulty in gaining access to the school was caused by the newness of the school. Many problems were still unresolved, such as finishing some work on the physical plant itself and ironing out last minute adjustments in curriculum. The Assistant Principal and Principal were quite interested in this particular consultation tool and were excited about the utilization of it within their buildings.

Reception to Proposed Survey

The Principal's Reception to the Proposed Survey

As stated in the previous paragraph, the Central Administration of the School District gave its approval and wanted some feedback, but the line

staff and the principal himself were the ones who were quite anxious to see the study conducted. The faculty was having problems in really jelling together as a cohesive group. This was not a function of lack of interest in working together, but simply that they were experiencing the pains of putting a new staff together -- and expecting individuals who had worked in other departments in other schools to suddenly become a cohesive team. The students as a whole saw the project as simply another task and didn't really show any positive or negative feelings about the survey itself.

The Staff's Reception to the Proposed Survey

The difficulty in carrying out the survey came when the staff had trouble in putting priorities on its time. Several attempts were made to present the overall nature of the survey and what some of the ramifications would be for the staff and students. Yet because of other pressing issues, it was difficult to gain time on the faculty agenda.

Another area which made the project somewhat difficult was getting clear agreement as to how the student population would be selected. It was finally decided that the English teachers would devote one class period to having the students work on the survey.

The other issue was resolved by leaving the survey with the faculty. They were asked to complete it on their own time after the faculty meeting and turn it in anonymously to one of the secretaries in the office. It did take several reminders to get all of the teacher responses in.

Ease of Survey

The ease with which the survey was carried out had to do with its shortness and the clarity of the instrument itself so that neither the faculty nor the student body saw it as difficult in terms of readability, understandability, or onerously long.

Analysis of Data

The data were analyzed by the HumRRO staff. The turnaround time was minimal. The raw data were mailed and returned within a week and a half. There were no noticeable difficulties in obtaining the analysis.

Significant Factors--Demographic Information Form

There are 900 students enrolled in the school with an average daily attendance of 857. The student-teacher ratio is 17:1. The ethnic composition of the student body is 97% white, 3% black and only a handful of other minorities. According to the principal, there are approximately 34 students residing in the district who attend other schools (private, parochial, etc.).

The principal was concerned about the rapid growth of the community but still saw everything in the community as extremely positive and supportive.

In terms of curriculum, the principal felt that there was an under-emphasis in vocational subjects. There seems to be a great deal of push from parents to maintain the upward mobility. (Through conversations with some groups of parents, there does seem to be some concern about offering a larger number of courses in a wider variety of areas.)

The number of transfer students is fairly high and affects approximately one-third of the school population. There is some concern about problems related to drug abuse and also, some students who appear to be approximately one year behind academically. Counselors report that the majority of these students have transferred from other schools and are not those who have seemingly come through this school system.

Another significant factor is that youngsters who live in the new condominiums are crowded together in close neighborhoods without sufficient recreational activities in which to participate. About 10 percent of the school population is perceived as either being potential dropouts, or being habitual absentees.

Lastly, there is some concern about the school not having sufficient programs for educationally or emotionally handicapped students. There is an alternative high school program in the district; however, at this point specific plans have not been worked out for the students of this high school to attend there.

Discipline problems were seen by administration to occur at a minimal level and when they did occur they were sent on to the counselors. The counselors, however, felt that the number of discipline problems were indeed

very high. There was some feeling that a definite process as to how to resolve types of discipline problems needed to be worked out. Another concern was that the overload of the discipline problems did not permit time to establish some types of preventative program. In addition, youngsters' inappropriate behavior was not being dealt with in the school and most of the counselors' time was spent in referring parents to outside agencies. For example, in one month approximately 100 cases were handled in this way by the counseling office.

Significant Factors - Questionnaires

The most striking significant factor identified in the questionnaires was the overall agreement with which both the students and the staff viewed the various areas identified on the survey. Although not all areas were statistically significant in both sets of data, it is fascinating to observe general trends. In all but one instance, students' and teachers' perceptions followed the same patterns. The areas of the questionnaire are displayed in Figure 1.

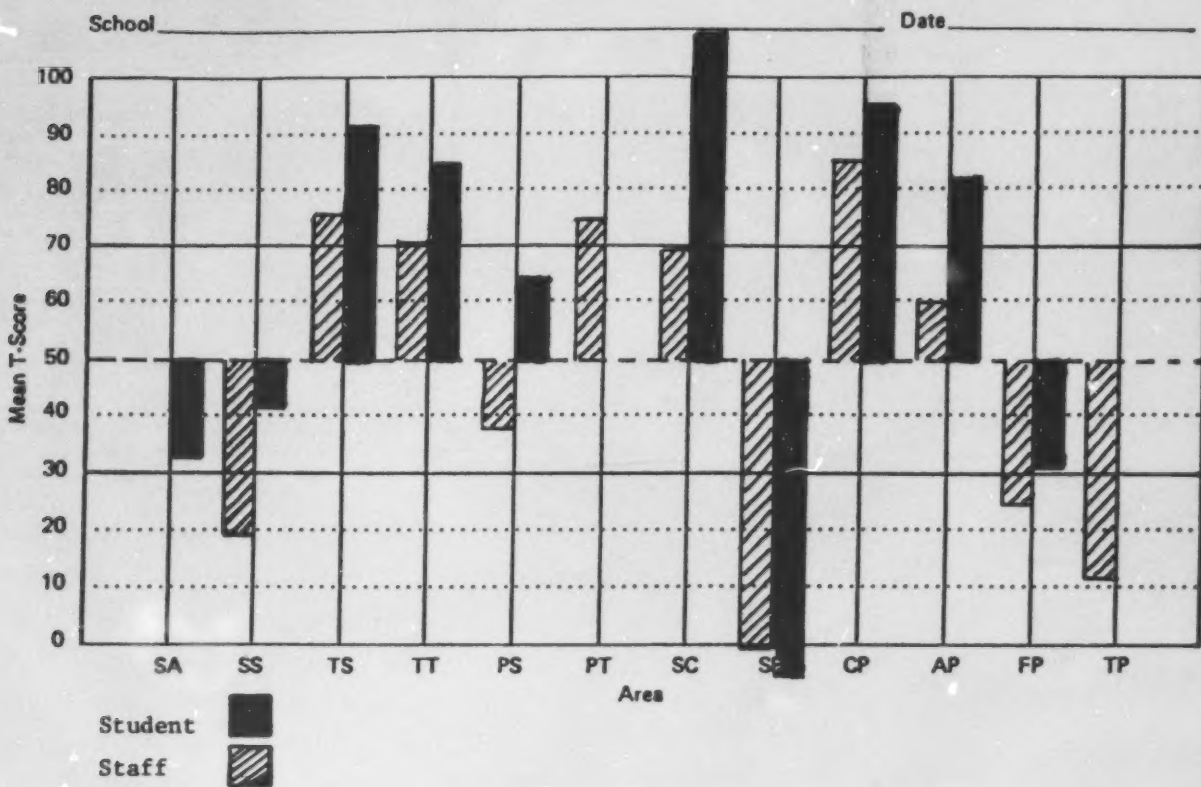
Reception of Data

Summaries of the data, by item and by area, were prepared and given to each faculty member. The findings were openly discussed at staff meetings. In turn, a series of task forces were formed to attempt to relate to and deal with the interpretations. The data did not apparently surprise the majority of the staff. However, what the survey did do, was motivate the staff and principal to examine more closely the types of problems that were identified.

Specifically, the staff viewed students in almost every instance as having a significant number of problems. Steps were then taken to attempt to remediate this by setting forth committees and working on the implementation of new discipline rules and procedures.

The staff was quite receptive to the data because of their own level of uncomfortability, and some sense of relief overtook the general staff that they were being heard and that their own perceptions were being validated. This further acted as an additional catalyst to

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



assist in the overall group process bringing the school teaching staff together in a more cohesive "team" fashion.

Students, on the other hand, felt somewhat helpless in being able to effect rapid change of their own system. This is somewhat (in my opinion) related more to the lack of power which the student government or council is allowed to have. It did precipitate class discussions which resulted in developing the beginning of a sense of esprit de corps, a sense of belonging, a sense of other people caring, a sense that things were not hopeless, and that their own (the student's) opinions were of value.

Plans for Intervention

As previously indicated, the plans for intervention came through "loud and clear" in terms of the school staff, principal, and student body wanting to do something about the areas which were clearly defined as problems. Consequently, the staff worked long and hard to develop some ideas along with the consultation team from the local Mental Health Center.

The objectives of that program were to see if changes would occur within the school. The school personnel reported that they did feel shifts were beginning to occur. Their concerns about student problems and lack of firm rules pertaining to absenteeism or pertaining to vandalism in the school were beginning to take effect. Superficially, the overall response was favorable.

In order to further check this out, late in the Spring of 1975, the school requested that the same questionnaire be readministered and another survey was given to both the staff and the student population. Analysis of the data from the second administration indicated lessening of problems. A positive feeling was seen, with the school and community working together. Another school evaluation committee was formed to work on the general characteristics of the concerns which were identified. This was funded solely on the few dollars that the principal had in his operating account. There was no money left in the school budget for keypunching or computer time. Consequently, our Mental Health Center volunteered one of its secretaries who hand tabulated the results and scored the survey.

There were specific follow-up plans for the next year. Primarily, this was a function of two variables. One, the mental health center would no longer be providing direct and consultation services to the school, but rather would only serve as a general referral source for the students and their families.

The school district elected to hire its own consultation staff. Several of the new staff see the function of the school psychologist or the school social worker more in terms of direct service, rather than in preventative or consultative modes. Unfortunately, this particular school, although asking for the continuation of the kinds of consultation services we had provided, could not receive them.

However, it was demonstrated that these particular instruments provided a vehicle for the staff and the consultants, at a crucial time, to quickly identify and move forward in terms of a general consultative model.

Plans for the future seem quite vague in this particular district. However, the other districts are stimulated by the results of the surveys and are

looking at the possibility of their own utilization.

One question which must be resolved is the necessary inservice training with the consultants who will be working in that particular school district. There seems to be a concern that with the poor state of the economy, inservice and consultative programs might be seen as frills and severely restricted.

There is no question that all individuals who had an opportunity to look at the survey and demographic results are favorably impressed and feel that there is value in utilizing this type of program. With some modifications, I see the possibility of using this in terms of other agencies and other clients than the public schools. Although obviously staff and student questionnaires would have to be dramatically revised for other agencies, the procedure does lend itself to general consultation with other types of open-system human service organizations.

A STUDY OF THE APPLICATION OF THE HIGH SCHOOL PROBLEM AREA SURVEY
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR CONSULTING FROM "WITHOUT"

Gerald Rubenstein, Ed.D.
Director, Consultation
and Education

Gary Morrow, Ph.D.
Instructor and Fellow
in Medicine

University of Rochester Medical Center

Introduction

Traditional mental health care delivery systems have evolved out of available health care models. Most of these models, except for those with an epidemiological, public health, or, more recently, a well-person base, assume a client constituency which is aware of their own pathological process or whose pathology is known to others (i.e., a parent, a friend, or a teacher) who might then request care on their behalf. Mental health care delivery approaches which are designed to provide services to specific populations who are typically symptomatic can readily work with the natural motivational orientations of the ill, or, for that matter, can challenge their avoidance patterns. Within symptomatic individuals there are forces driving them towards health care ("I am sick," "I want attention," "I'll lose money if I am out of work," etc.) as well as restraining forces ("It costs money," "It takes time and energy," "I really don't want to change,"). These forces are also present when such services are desired by, or offered to, primary care institutions (schools, families, etc.), except that, when applied to institutions these complex forces grow at a geometric rate. The change/no change paradoxes (Rubenstein, 1973) can take on overwhelming proportions in this case.

In institutions such as schools, the negative valence ("not to change") of such paradoxes (to change and not to change) is "put into" different groups. It is commonly seen, for example, that if the school administration wants to change, the teachers don't, if the teachers want to change, the students don't and if the students do wish for a change to occur, the administration doesn't. If all three groups ever did agree, then one might predict the parents or Board of Education would disagree. This perpetual polarization effectively leads to scapegoating and an "if only" mentality: i.e., if only the

students weren't that way, then we wouldn't have these problems. Such examples with their peculiar linear logic suggest that traditional cause and effect relationships are not always applicable in the diagnosis of complex social systems.

This paper describes a research-based consultation/intervention project which highlights some of these issues. In particular, various aspects of this project will be used to illustrate some consultative dilemmas encountered when working with an institution.

Description of the School and Community

High School A is located in a suburban town which is adjacent to a northeastern city with a population of approximately one million. The school itself contains grades 9 - 12 with an enrollment of just over 2500 students and a faculty of 116. Ninety-nine percent of both the faculty and the student body are Caucasian.

The town (as well as the school) is in the process of adjusting to many significant changes it has undergone in the last 10 - 15 years. From a once stable and somewhat static area on the rural fringe, it has blossomed into a busy suburban community with new and expanded shopping plazas, increased population, new housing developments, and numerous apartment complexes. Census tract data (1970) described the town as having a population of 19,606 persons (19,490 white and 119 non-white); there were a total of 4,659 family units.

Access to the School

The initial contact with System A was made with the Director of Pupil Personnel Services (PPS), who was known personally to one of the authors. We were considering a variety of projects in grades K - 12 and this first meeting was designed to allow him to select projects in terms of his perception of the system-based needs of school system A. He spontaneously gravitated towards the High School Problem Survey Project (for reasons which, at that time, were unclear) and suggested that he act as liaison with the Superintendent. Some weeks later a meeting was arranged by the Superintendent in order to explore our proposal further.

Entry into a social system is always a complex business. These complexities seem to derive from a variety of sources. What are my tasks? What are my sanctions and what is the nature of my mandate? Who is my client? How will the formal and informal organization structures effect my work? What is the relationship between my primary tasks and the primary tasks of the organization I am consulting to?

Of particular import in this project were these last few questions. In a school intervention project of this sort the client's identity is often not clear: is it a) the school system as a whole, b) the building principal, c) the superintendent, d) the faculty, e) the students, f) some combination of these potentially distinct units, or g) all of these client systems? Paradoxically, one of the primary tasks of any organization is to maintain the status quo, therefore, any activity which potentially might disrupt the steady equilibrium can be seen as a threat to one or more subsystems of the school system. It is these components of the larger system that need to be identified with and allied with as resources in order to prevent future sabotage.

In this particular project, the definition of the client system was mistakenly left vague. This situation directly led to a great deal of confusion for both the intervention team and the superintendent in at least one concrete situation: It was left unclear as to who would become recipients of the data once they were generated.

At the initial exploratory meeting the following persons were present: The Superintendent, the Director of P.P.S., the Assistant Principal, two teachers (one from the Faculty Committee on Discipline and the second an Ombudsman for the students), as well as the Research/Intervention Team composed of the following four persons: A Post-doctoral Fellow in Community Psychology, a Mental Health Educator, a Graduate student in Clinical Psychology, and a Doctoral Level Psychologist. During this meeting the following issues were explored: The nature of the Research/Intervention Team, our research and services needs, the rationale for the development of the project, a description and examination of the instruments, a discussion of a contract with the school system including the procedures and timelines to be followed, and other issues having to do with meetings with principals, students,

and parents. (It should be noted that at a later date it was decided not to meet with parents.)

This initial meeting brought with it several illustrative features. In organization terms, it might be considered an intergroup event wherein groups which are ongoing or ad hoc subsystems of a larger institution attempt to meet together to presumably perform some task. This task typically is explicitly stated and agreed upon by representatives of each of these groups. It is usually assumed that all members of both groups have access to the information exchanged between these representatives. To the extent that this does not occur, and the task of the meeting is not made clear, frequently confusion results. Of particular importance at this meeting was a sense that some of the members of the school system were actively searching for vehicles for generating data about the school system which might eventuate in change, whereas other members of this group were either actively not wanting data or were simply passive observers of the meeting. Similarly, the Research/Intervention Team seemed to be experiencing its own split alliances to service activities, training activities, and/or research activities. This raises the question as to whether or not the team which collects the data should be the same group as the team which provides the future intervention. Predictably there were a variety of responses to our proposal ranging from complete approval (the Superintendent) to mild reluctance (it appeared to be only mild because the Superintendent was present). After consensus was obtained two issues remained: meeting with staff and students, and practical issues involving implementation.

It was decided that the Ombudsman for student affairs would work with the student council and seek its approval, cooperation, and sanction. Interestingly enough, no such process was suggested for the faculty. At the time it was felt by all that simply explaining the project at each of the four faculty meetings (representing the whole faculty) would suffice.

The student council supported the project with some vigor. At this point sampling issues were examined and verified. It was decided that we would survey students at all four grade levels, randomly selecting students within grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 with the constraint

that each group of 50 be balanced for sex. As this was a large school that was on "triple session," the sample was further constrained such that each session was equally represented (so that the data could also be analyzed by session).

During the first two meetings with the faculty everything went quite smoothly. The project goals and procedures were explained and all the teachers complied. At the third session a major disruption occurred. After some mild criticism of the instruments, a male faculty member stood up and made a poignant and somewhat paranoid plea to his colleagues. He suggested the following points:

1. Negotiations were coming up and why should the faculty participate in giving ammunition to the administration (e.g., about student perceptions of the faculty)?
2. Why was this research occurring now?
3. Would they see the findings before the superintendent did?
4. Teachers were not under contract to fill out such questionnaires.
5. It was an invasion of privacy since one could be singled out by the identifying data.
6. "Search your own conscience. I cannot in good conscience participate in this!"

Following his speech, a lively debate ensued with the faculty rapidly polarizing and politicizing the act of participation. The debate was allowed to continue for several minutes before it was suggested by the research team that perhaps it would be more fruitful and facilitative to engage in problem-solving behaviors. The group was helped to do this and they eventually made the following proposals (demands?):

1. All previously collected data (from the other two faculty groups) was to be handed over to the teacher's union representative.
2. He was to become the official bargaining agent of the faculty.
3. He was not to support this research until the superintendent agreed to let him see the data at the same time the superintendent reviewed it.

The superintendent and his administrative group became incensed over the way in which this academic issue was politicized and became

entrenched in their position: teachers had to fill this survey out. What was at issue now was not a "Research/Intervention project" but a political power struggle between two opposing camps.

It was suggested that perhaps it would be helpful for both parties to join together against a common problem, namely since both the administrative staff and the faculty had a vested interest in these data (which somehow appeared to be rapidly taking on magical proportions) how could they work together to gather and utilize them. It was suggested that all appropriate parties would be present for data-feedback and that any interpretations would be made conjointly in/by this committee, but that the hard data would remain with the superintendent to be used at his discretion. This proposal was agreed to by all parties.

Analysis of Data

The data were approached from a number of converging viewpoints. The student data were examined in terms of the whole group (grades 9 - 12 combined, N = 172), by grades (9 - 10 VS 11 - 12) by sex, by session (1 X 2 X 3) and by those students who specifically commented on "overcrowdedness" as an additional written statement. The teacher data were examined in terms of the whole group (N = 93), by sex, by session, by specialty (academic VS non-academic) and by number of years teaching (> 10 VS < 10).¹

Significant Factors -- Demographic Information Form

In this particular project the Demographic Information Form did not add appreciably to the pool of data used in making interpretations except insofar as the principal's summary of the needs and problems of the school suggest his sensitivity to the following core issues:

1. Communication between staff and administration (data suggested that this was a pressing area of concern for teachers as well).

¹ An appendix containing a summary of all these analyses has been prepared by the authors. It can be obtained by writing to either author at University of Rochester Medical Center, Strong Memorial Hospital, Department of Psychiatry - Division of Psychology, 300 Crittenden Blvd. Rochester, NY 14642

2. Consistency within standards of teachers dealing with kids - inconsistent grading and privileges.
3. Rumor Mills.
4. Staff perception of kids as human beings (corrective discipline VS punitive discipline).

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

There was a remarkable consistency in the data both within and between the following groups of teachers and students: male and female teachers, male and female students, students and teachers, and students in different grade levels and sessions. (See Figure.)

1. Faculty and Students Compared

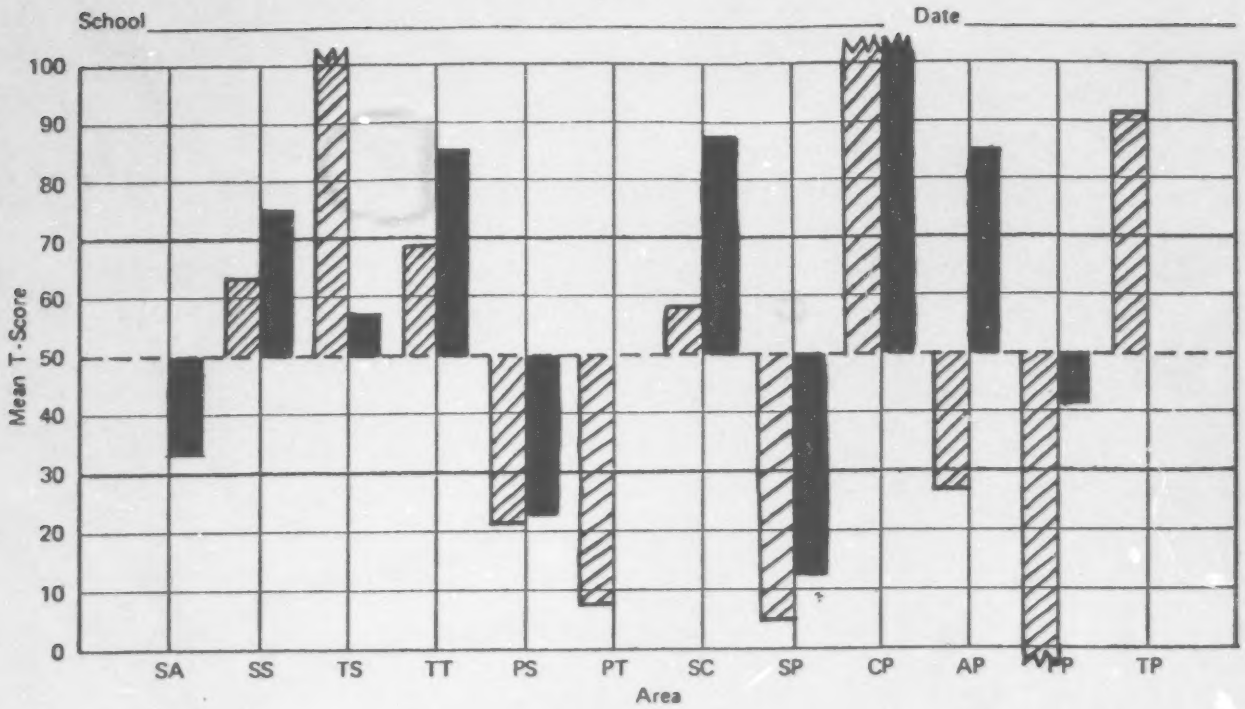
When T scores were split at the mean ($T = 50$), both staff and students agree on the significance of problems in the areas of "student problems," "principal/student problems," and "facility problems." In addition, students see "school attractiveness" and teachers see their relationship with the principal at issue. "Community problems" were ranked last (the least problem) on all analyses. There is a marked discrepancy in staff and student perceptions of "administrative problems" with the staff seeing these as more at issue than the students. "School/Community relations are also seen differently by these two groups with staff being more concerned about both a lack of community interest and how local people feel about the school. There is also agreement on four major problem items: absenteeism, cutting class, profanity, and students who don't like school and don't do school work.

Further analyses of the data revealed the following areas of concern:

2. Comparisons by Grade (Students)

- a. Students in the upper grades saw their relationship with the principal as more stressed than students in the lower grades.
- b. Students in the lower grades were more concerned about student/student relationships and were more concerned about administrative problems than students in the upper grades.
- c. School spirit is the most pressing item in the upper grades, but does not even emerge in the lower grades. Profanity, assignment to classes, and the class size were troublesome in the upper grades -- not in the lower grades.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



3. Comparisons by Sex (Teachers)

- a. Female teachers are more concerned by Principal/Teacher issues than are male teachers.

4. Comparisons by Specialty (Teachers)

- a. Non-academic teachers see more teacher problems. They are more disturbed by theft and vandalism; whereas academic teachers focus on the way the principal gets along with students and the number of students who don't like going to school and don't do their school work.

Reception of Data

After the raw data were analyzed, a second plenary meeting was held at which time the data were disseminated to the original group plus the teacher union representative. Initially we worked from the "whole group" data. On the basis of these data, the group established its own criteria for processing the findings and made decisions about further information it needed (i.e., breakdown of specific items by session). At this meeting there was quite a bit of interest and exuberance but it was almost as though the fact that what was being discussed was "their school" was denied. Unpredictably the sense of the group as well as the Superintendent was to "hold off on planning any intervention project."

Interpretation of Data

In general it was agreed that the two major stress points in the high school system were the physical plant itself and the students' and teachers' relationship to the principal. It is significant to note in terms of the concurrent validity of the instrument that both of these issues were quite alive in the workings of the school. Even as the data were being collected a community-wide drive was being conducted by all levels (students, faculty and administration) of the school to float a bond issue in order to do extensive renovations and attach a large addition to the high school. This was a rather impressive effort in a community which had previously voted down three

bond issues. Simultaneous to our feedback sessions, the school received overwhelming support in a community referendum for its renovations and addition. One of the superintendent's wishes, which he made clear to us in our first meeting, was to use the data to support his argument that the school plant was having a negative impact on school morale. The data were analyzed too late to do this, but they nevertheless supported his point. (The most meaningful intervention could only be provided by obtaining community support for building funds.) The staff saw the facility problem as its greatest concern, the students as its fourth greatest concern, and the Demographic Information Form didn't suggest it at all. Parenthetically, the staff in grades 9 and 10 were significantly more affected by the facility problem than were those in grades 11 and 12.

The relationship between students and teachers with their principal is more complex. In the main, students see their relationship with the principal as their second most significant concern after "student problems." The staff ranks their own relationship with him as their third most pressing issue and his relationship with students as their fourth most pressing concern. Students and teachers in grades 11 and 12 are most concerned about relationships with the principal, whereas in grades 9 and 10 this relationship is not seen as quite as critical. Most interesting is that when the data for teachers is analyzed by sex we find that female teachers are significantly more concerned with the principal than are male teachers.

Earlier it was suggested that there were agendas in this school system which were not made completely clear to the researchers. One of these issues was the enigmatic role of the high school principal. He was not included at any of the meetings with the research team previous to the collection of the data; all data gathering arrangements were made through the assistant principal. He had difficulty making time for the Demographic Information Form interview. At the time it was suggested that he was spending much of his time getting the bond issue passed.

Six months after the data were collected we were informed that the principal was asked to leave the district. It is our feeling that

the roots of this decision were entrenched in the history of the system and that our data certainly corroborate this. Had we been aware of this underlying dynamic at the outset it might have been possible to focus an eventual intervention on maintenance rather than exclusion or termination of the principal. Beyond the personal issues involved in such actions, it is clear that the data were quite sensitive to an on-going school concern. Finally, it was decided not to work on the one other salient problem area: "student problems" because of the ambiguous and amorphous nature of this area.

Plans for Intervention

At this last conjoint meeting between school district personnel and the research team it was decided not to pursue any interventions. There was a wish to take a more leisurely look at the findings and perhaps to repeat the study in the future. In light of the fact that there will be two major changes in the school over the next year (an improved physical plant and a new principal) it would be of interest to redo the study and examine the differential impact of such events in terms of a comparison with the present data and to see what problem areas emerge as these changes are making themselves felt.

How It's Going

In summary these procedures can perhaps have their greatest impact when used as an organic part of the school fiber. The need to build them into the context of the system's ongoing, enduring self-assessment procedures to be performed conjointly by students, teachers, administrators, mental health workers and perhaps parents is now clearer. It is suggested that future users of these procedures work on guidelines for regulating the use of data (stipulated in advance of its collection), adequate frames of reference for interpreting the meaning of perceptual data, and finally an atmosphere of openness for frank discussion of the implications of these findings. These three dimensions are all seen as critical precursors to a successful and meaningful intervention project.

A FACULTY COUNCIL IS COMPARED TO THE
REMAINING FACULTY AS PART OF THE SURVEY

Michael I. Singer, Ph.D.
Director, Consultation and Education
Concord Area Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Mass.

Description of School and Community

This report is about a high school of about six hundred students in grades 9 through 12. It is the only high school in this town of approximately 10,000 people. The town is largely white, with a small Puerto Rican group. There are practically no Blacks in town. There is one quite large industry which makes mini-computers and employs a large number of town people, but mostly in the non-professional positions. The town is geographically compact and in many ways appears like a small mill town with its bars, railroad section, business section, etc. Socioeconomically, it would best be described as lower middle class.

Access to the School

Our mental health center has had a consulting relationship to this school system for 5 years. However, the current consultant, a female, doctoral level clinical psychologist, had been involved with the system only since the beginning of the school year.

The consultant's first contact with the school system was with the Director of Pupil Personnel and the Superintendent of the town school system. They suggested the high school as a recipient of our consultive services. The various possibilities for consultive services were then discussed with the high school principal, who gave preliminary agreement to the utilization of the survey forms. The instruments were then presented to the Faculty Council (a group made up primarily of department heads), who approved the utilization of the forms, agreed to complete the staff questionnaires, and also took responsibility for explaining and administering the forms to staff members in their departments. The principal agreed to have the student questionnaires administered to all seniors. All respondents were assured anonymity.

Members of the Faculty Council requested that their questionnaires be analyzed separately from remaining faculty so that they might have some feedback on how their views corresponded with those of the faculty at large.

Reception to Proposed Survey

It is not fully clear why the principal agreed to the use of the survey forms. He seemed generally suspicious of mental health services and was guarded in his general response to the consultant and the survey itself. This guardedness is reflected in the relative paucity of information given on the Demographic Information Form, which the principal insisted on doing in private, rather than in an interview with the consultant. The Faculty Council also appeared suspicious and anxious when filling out the forms and in their general reception of the material. However, all parties involved did respond on the survey forms and cooperated in introducing the instruments to other staff and students.

Analysis of Data

After the survey forms were analyzed by computer through the HumRRO facilities, the principal called a meeting of the full faculty in order for the consultant to present and discuss the results.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

Figure 1 compares responses of the Faculty Council (n=13) to the remaining faculty at large (n=27). As shown, the two groups responded very similarly.

Figure 2 compares total faculty (N=40) and Senior Class students (N=102) responses. Again, the two profiles are remarkably similar with common negative assessments of the school in the area of Student Problems and common positive assessments in areas of Community Problems and Facility Problems. One striking discrepancy between the perception of students and that of staff was in the area of School-Community

FIGURE 1
HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile

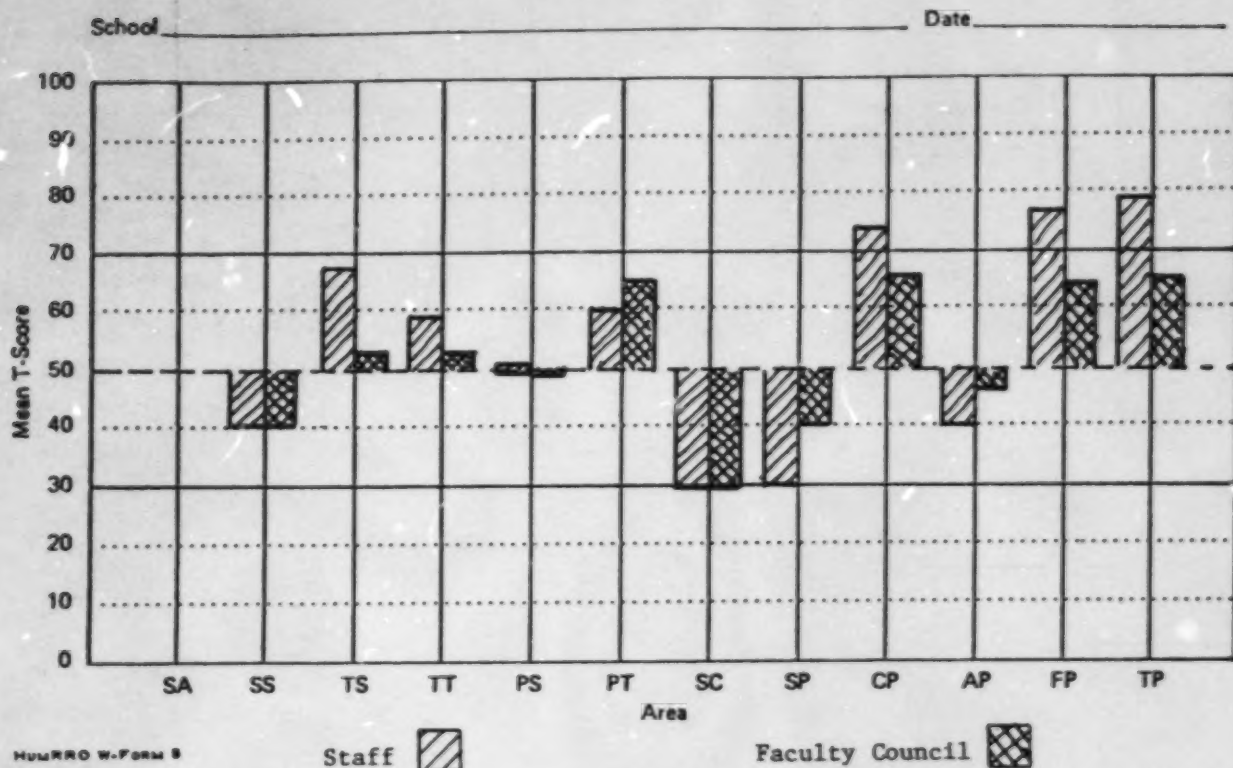
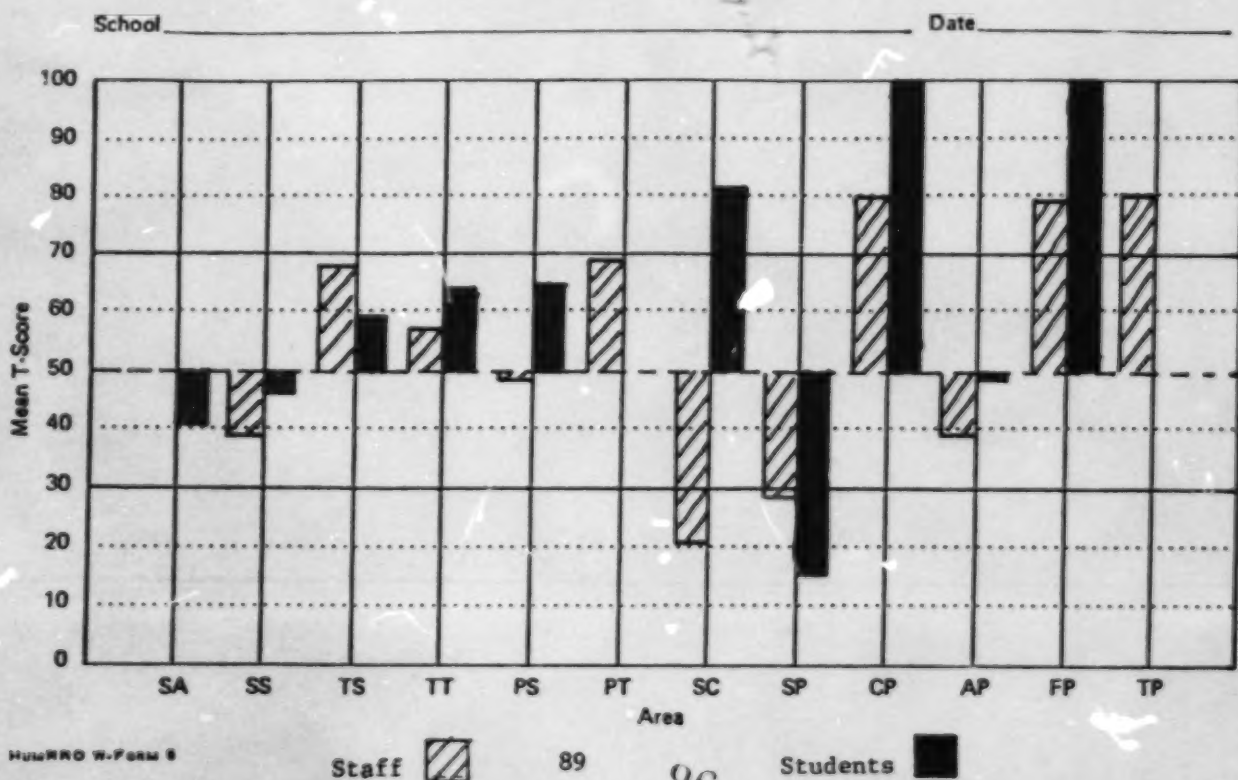


FIGURE 2
HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



Relationships, students viewing this area as particularly positive, school staff seeing this area as particularly poor. Finally, in regard to significant findings, staff saw the area of Teacher Problems in a positive light.

Table I shows a list of school system problem areas ordered for saliency along with items that contributed significantly in the negative direction. As indicated, staff and students agreed on a number of items of concern in the area of Student Problems. As discussed above, in the area of School-Community Relations, only staff scored the listed items in the negative direction. In the remaining three areas only a few items were scored in the negative direction but both students and staff agreed on the first listed item under Student Characteristics and Administrator Problems.

Reception of data

In general, the results, presented both orally and in written form, were received with little effect. Since this was late in the school year, it was decided that the consultant would return the following year to discuss intervention possibilities.

TABLE I

SALIENCY OF PROBLEMS (as perceived by both staff and students unless otherwise noted)

Areas	
1. SP - STUDENT PROBLEMS	Significant Items: --Cheating --Cutting class --Absenteeism --Alcohol --Profanity --Underachievement (staff) --Drugs (students) --Dropouts (students)
2. SC - SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS (Staff only saw problems in this area)	Significant Items: --Way people in this neighborhood feel about the school --Lack of community interest --Teacher dissatisfaction with the community --Community dissatisfaction with the school --School policies that conflict with parents' ideas
3. SS - STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS	Significant Items: --Number of students who don't like school or do their school work --Capable students who feel school is waste of time (staff) --Students who are 'loners' (staff)
4. PS - PRINCIPAL-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS	Significant Items: --Loose or lax policies on student behavior that foster disorderliness and disorganization (staff) --The amount of influence student opinion has on the way school is run (students)
5. AP - ADMINISTRATOR PROBLEMS	Significant Items: --Inadequate counseling services --Inadequate programs for gifted students (staff) --Inadequate remedial services (staff)

A SURVEY THAT PAID OFF A YEAR LATER

Sylvia Barnes
Director of Children's Services
Orange-Person-Chatham County Mental Health Center

Description of School and Community

This town is a small southern college community. A large percent of the 50,000 people in the area are affiliated with the university or its hospital. Another large segment of the population is employed at a complex of numerous research firms. There are many poor people in the town, some of whom are graduated students who choose to live a simple life.

The schools are strongly supported by the community; the community also makes a lot of demands on the school system as they feel they know what constitutes good education. In fact the community is blessed (or cursed) with many experts who do not agree.

The high school, the sample school, has about 750 students of which about one-third are black and two-thirds are white. Over half the students are above the national norms in achievement. This is probably usual for a university town. Another factor relating to such a community is the high rate of teacher turnover. Many of the teachers are student wives who only teach while their spouses are in school. There is a lot of competition for the teaching positions; therefore, the selection criteria can be high. As a result the quality of teachers, by and large, is remarkable.

Just as there is an abundance of teachers from whom to choose, there is also an abundance of consultants and all kinds of "helpers," mainly from the university, who wish to do "their thing" in the school system. The central administration has had no centralized coordination of these various resources, consequently no administrative sanction. As one might expect then, what follows is little commitment on the consultee's part as well as the consultant's. To say the least, this is not an effective or efficient use of resources. This situation is particularly tragic in this town because of the vast amount of very good resources available to the schools.

Access to the School

The Mental Health Center has been working with the school system for about seven years. The Center has never had enough staff to afford the schools a consultant in each school on a regular basis. Our consultants have been available for case consultation and follow-up of cases referred to the clinic and to give workshops for teacher in-service training. The relationship between the Center and the schools has always been positive and open. Their biggest complaint has been that we did not have enough time to give them. The author has consulted in various schools in the system for about two years, but had not consulted with the sample school until the introduction of the survey.

Reception to Proposed Survey

When the idea of doing a survey in the junior high was introduced to the superintendent, he was very receptive and supportive. His attitude perhaps reflects his trust in the Mental Health Center. He receives fifty or more similar requests each year but most of these are turned down.

The principal was receptive to the proposed survey on the condition that there would be some follow-up. That is, he wanted to know the outcome, and wanted someone to be able to respond in some way to the problems that were indicated by the survey. His main concern about the survey itself was the difficulty he perceived in conceptualizing what constituted a problem. For an example, there are so many ways to consider dropouts as a problem, depending on the point of view one takes. Does the number of dropouts constitute the problem, or is any number of dropouts a problem? Is the dropout in the community the problem and thus a community problem? With these kinds of questions unanswered he did not see how the results could be valid.

In response to his concern it was explained that it was true that various persons would have their own frame of reference for deciding if something was a problem and they would also have individual subjective continuums on which they rated the problem. What we are in reality identifying is what the staff and students perceive as problems. The survey is not intended to identify the true problems as defined by some list of objective criteria.

Ease of Survey

Because of the concerns of the principal, the health educator who was in charge of administering the survey, did not carry out the survey with the staff. She had already given it to the students. Unfortunately, she did not inform the author of the problem. It took four weeks to get in touch with the health educator to find out the status of the project. It was indeed a surprise to discover that she had dropped the project as she was initially extremely enthusiastic about using the instruments as part of some planning she wished to do with the staff. Eventually the staff questionnaire was administered.

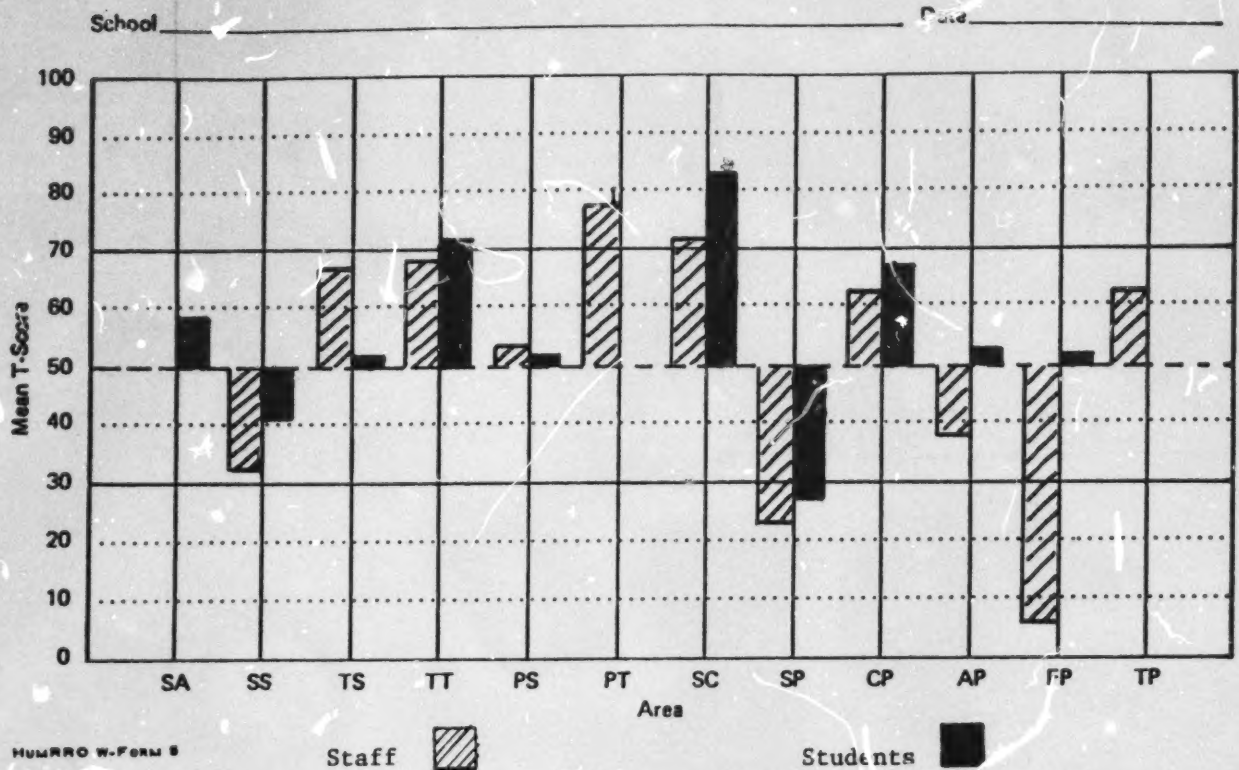
The author, being aware of the lack of coordination of services, suggested that the interpretation of the survey results be shared with the staff and all the other resource people in the school in order to capitalize on everyone's ideas and their help in carrying them out in some sort of coordinated effort. The principal went along with the idea and shared the names of the others working in the school who could be contacted. They were, and they were enthusiastic about the planning session which was to take place on the teachers' work day. As the time approached and plans were fairly complete the principal was contacted to discuss the structure for the planning session. At that time the principal explained that the teachers' work day was filled with things that had to take priority over the planning session.

As this school year closed, we changed our strategy. Beginning in September, 1975, a consultant was assigned to the school to go on a regular weekly basis. The principal was very receptive to this arrangement. The consultant has begun a series of planning sessions with the staff which will include a discussion of the survey and plans for workshops or whatever process best responds to their needs.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

For the most part, the agreement between the students and teachers is remarkable. The areas in which the staff T-scores were significantly above the average mean of 50 were Principal-Teacher relationships and School-Community relationships. The areas where the T-score was significantly below the average mean included Student Problems and Facility Problems. (See Figure 1.)

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



The responses were close to the investigator's predictions except for two areas. More problems had been expected in the area of Teacher-Student relationships and Student-Student relationships. This expectation was based on observations made there years ago when there was indeed a great deal of friction between students and between students and staff. It was encouraging to see evidence of some progress.

One student T-score which was significantly above the mean was in the School-Community area. The area in which the mean T-score was significantly below the mean was Student Problems.

Again, for the student data, the investigator had no sound basis for predicting the School-Community area; however, it was expected that there would be more extreme mean T-scores in two areas, Student-Student and Student Problems. Part of the rationale behind this prediction is historical and part is based on an awareness that many of the students have a keen awareness of student problems and thus it was predicted

that they would reflect student problems more severely. Apparently, their awareness also enables them to place things in perspective.

Interpretations of the Data

The principal did not expect the average mean T-scores to be as high as they were in the areas of Principal-Teacher, or Teacher-Teacher relationships. He was very pleased to discover their ratings of these areas. He was still of the opinion that the teacher relationships were not as good as he would like to see. His wish was that they have mutual respect and concern for each other with much more positive regard for each other. He remarked that in the area of Teacher-Student relations, he was not surprised that the teachers had a higher mean score as they always seem to perceive themselves as doing a better job than the students perceive them doing. The very low mean score in the area of Facility Problems reflects the teachers' strong feelings about class size. There is a big push in the state by teachers to reduce class size. Presently class size varies from 23 to 33.

The consultant leading the planning discussions reports that there was a lot of discussion of the survey profile with some consensus on three areas.

a. The staff agreed that the area of Student Relations would be more accurately represented at a lower T-score at the time of review. They felt that student relations had deteriorated since the survey was made.

b. The staff felt that the mean student score for the area of Student-Teacher relations probably was representative of the things covered by the statements in the survey; however, they felt that there are factors not covered by the survey that have a decided effect on Teacher-Student Relations. Interesting that all the things they pointed out were concerned with student behavior; however, as they pointed out, the statements on the survey primarily concern teacher behavior. The staff felt that to include statements such as the following would render a better balance of factors that are related to Teacher-Student Relations: (1) Student refusal to follow a teacher's request; (2) Disruptive attention-getting student behavior; and (3) Passive-aggressive student

behavior such as always being late for class, never having books and materials for class, or never hearing what the teacher says.

c. The third area was Teacher Relations. The staff indicated that the T-score reflected very well the statements in the survey, but they felt something important was missing that was vital for good teacher relations. They described the aspect missing from the statements as an attitude of support and caring for one another. As one teacher described it, "You feel you are important just because of you, not just because of what you do." They were reluctant to differentiate this factor much more, but did say that they felt it was missing in their staff. Consequently, if this factor had been included in the survey statements, they felt the T-score would be lower.

Plans for Intervention

The mental health consultant has held a conference with the principal and the principal is still of the opinion that the teachers would benefit (as well as the students) if the teachers learned to relate to one another better. He is concerned about the model they set for the students. He is also concerned about how teachers feel about themselves and how their peer relations affect their feelings.

He would like to know how teachers feel about students and would like some help in enabling them to respond to the needs and problems of students without being emotionally drained themselves.

The principal suggested that he and the consultant decide on a possible format for a series of workshops with on-going follow-up. The various options will be presented to the staff and they will be at liberty to modify the plans to best fit their needs. For the most part, the teachers will determine the content of the workshops.

In the author's discussion of the conference the consultant held with the principal, it was pointed out that the principal and teachers were thinking along the same lines. We both agreed that an open discussion with the teachers would evolve naturally into planning that would be tailored to their needs. We are both aware that the teachers are likely to be at various readiness levels for workshops in interpersonal relations. This will be taken into account with a lot of sensitivity to what might be threatening to the staff.

In addition to the consultant who is planning the workshops and follow-up for the teachers, other mental health staff (in the alcohol and drug programs) will be available to work with the students in areas of interpersonal relations, including peer counseling and values clarification. Some work has already begun in the school with the students. The Director of Pupil Personnel is teaching Rational Emotive Therapy.

In summary, the work with the principal, teachers and students of this Junior High School holds a great deal of promise for some effective intervention. The consultants working with the school seem very attuned to the needs and anxieties of the staff and have some sound ideas of how to respond to these.

REPORT ON A FAIRLY COMFORTABLE SCHOOL

Sheldon L. Callister, Ed. D.
Program Director for Youth Service
Weber Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Utah

Description of School and Community

This school is a junior high school composed of grades seven, eight, and nine. The student population is 698; there are 27 classroom teachers, two teaching specialists, one counselor, a principal, and an assistant principal. Sixty percent of the students reflect families with low middle incomes. The student body is predominantly White with one Black student, and 11 Chicano, eight Oriental, and eight Indian students. The school is located in a rural setting six miles from a city of about 85,000 population. The major portion of the families represented in the school are Mormon (L.D.S.) with relatively conservative views. The school facility itself is at least 25 years old and there is some concern on the part of the school staff to expand and renovate the facility.

Access to the School

The evaluation program was rather easy to initiate, since there was already an ongoing consultation relationship established between the Mental Health Center and the school. The actual presentation to the school people concerning this project was accomplished in October 1974, but access to the school was made some years ago in regular consultation programs.

Reception to Proposed Survey

From the outset the administration appeared to be quite receptive to the idea of surveying programs, facilities, and attitudes of staff and students. They had already been involved in other such surveys, but felt that this particular survey had some additional positive attributes that interested them. Also it was timely in that the district administration had mandated some Management By Objectives type

directives concerning school programming etc., that made this survey valuable to them. The staff cooperated in the survey. Those we talked to later seemed to be positive in their outlook toward this program.

Ease of Survey

Generally the survey effort was not difficult. If there was any area of difficulty it probably was in the time required for the consultant in arranging for and meeting with the school administration to set up and carry out the survey.

Analysis of Data

The data were collected, summarized at the Center and sent to HumRRO for analysis. Again there was no real difficulty in this effort. If there was any problem it was mainly concerned with the time necessary to make a more detailed comparative analysis after the data came back to us from HumRRP. One of the concerns to us in the analysis was that we had no normative data with which to compare this school and so it was helpful to us to receive recently, the composite data for the entire set of field trials reported on in this document.¹ (The questionnaire data of this survey are compared to the data of the larger study in a following section.)

Significant Factors -- Demographic Information Form

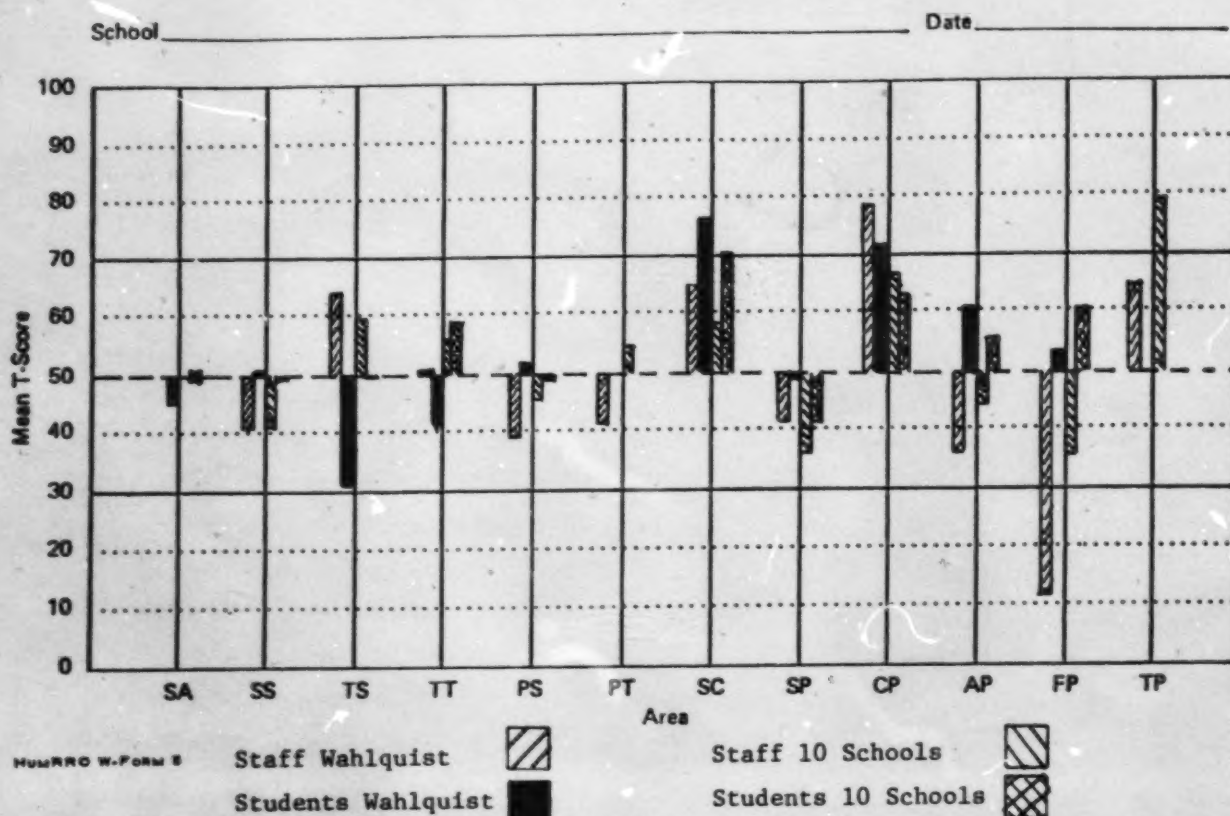
The principal's perception was that the geographic location of the school and the relatively conservative attitude of the community and students result in few problems of acting out behavior or disturbances such as one might find in a large city school. Also, parents seem to be very supportive and the school administration is quite satisfied with the community attitude toward this school. It appears that there is some concern on the part of staff and administration with an insufficient number of people who are able to provide special programs and help to handicapped children (emotionally and educationally). The biggest single problem that the administration noted in the survey was the difficulty in communications among teachers, students, and administration.

¹See Goffard, et al in the Introduction.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

The following are significant comparative observations: a) The area of student problems had been one of the more serious factors in the total survey, but was not so great at this school; b) Teacher-Student relations were rated by students as a relatively serious problem, whereas the total group of schools shows a more neutral rating; c) Teachers both at this school and for the total survey indicated some problem in the administrative area, but slightly more at this school; d) The staff and students said that both community problems and school community relationships are positive points in this school. The respective respondent groups of the total sample agree, but are a little more conservative; e) The teachers here are fairly positive about teacher problems, but the staff in the total sample is even more so; f) Facility problems were rated significantly worse by teachers at the school than in the total survey. (See Figure.)

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys -- Profile



Reception of Data

Generally the administration received the information very well and as a matter of fact used the information to make very specific plans for changes in the school. The principal met with the staff and student representatives and presented the information gained from the surveys. This information seemed to be received well by the student group and the staff and they did enter into agreements as to changes to be made based on these factors.

Interpretations of the Data

The areas that were chosen as needs, based upon the survey and discussions ensuing from it, were: a) A program is needed which will promote pride in the school and community, among both the staff and students; b) There is a need to identify high and low achievers so that programs can be geared to them appropriately; c) There is a need to develop quality activity for students; d) There is a need to set up a good public relations system, especially for staff, to become more involved in the community. Another need is to develop programs to enhance the self-image of students in general.

Plans for Intervention

a) A "pride" program will be developed to begin with a survey of students who reflect their pride in the school and community and then a program will be developed to enhance this aspect in student attitudes; b) There will be another program designed to locate high and low achievers and to build programs to provide enhancement to these groups which have specific needs. This will be done through analysis of grades and also through feedback from staff. Both high and low achievers will be assigned to specific advisors to follow-up and give them assistance as needed; c) A self-image program will be developed which will start with a self-image survey. Once this is accomplished, the low self-image students will be assigned to specific advisors for help and assistance as needed; d) A public relations committee will be composed, of staff and students, to provide positive communications throughout the community regarding school activities; e) A "postcard" program will be initiated. When there is positive feedback to be given, teachers

will send students messages on postcards addressed to their homes. This is an effort to improve communications between staff and students.

How it's Going

During the month of August target dates were set up for each of the various objectives and follow-up was planned. There appears to be a good deal of interest shown by all involved at the school to carry out these objectives. The forecast for the future seems positive in that there is definite action going on with plans for future programming and with support built into these programs from the Mental Health consultation staff.

USE OF THE INSTRUMENTS IN AN ESTABLISHED CONSULTATION PROGRAM

Sheldon L. Callister, Ed.D.
Program Director for Youth Services
Weber Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Utah

Description of School and Community

This school is located in a middle class residential area in a mountain state and is composed of grades seven, eight and nine. The major portion of the student body is Caucasian with 798 White students, 15 Chicanos, 11 Blacks, 3 American Indians, and 3 Orientals. The staff is totally White. The economic status of the community the school serves is widely varied, although the average income is probably low middle. There are approximately 20 families who qualify for free lunch, while 25% of the students come from homes with incomes of \$16,000 or more.

The people in the area are relatively conservative with about 60% of the population being Latter Day Saints.

Access to the School

Previous to the effort to gain entry for this specific purpose there was an ongoing consulting relationship with this school from our Mental Health Center. As part of the ongoing consultation and other communicative relationships with the administration of the school, this project was posed to them as an addition to the programs available from the Center.

Reception to Proposed Survey

The administration welcomed the opportunity to use the survey system we presented to them. The principal and others of the administrative staff scrutinized the survey items quite carefully before deciding that they were appropriate for the purposes that they had in mind. The staff responded in a cooperative manner, when approached with the survey for their students. There was not a great deal of enthusiasm, but on the other hand there were no negative indications from any staff members.

Ease of Survey

One factor that made the survey quite easy to administer was that representative English classes from the ninth grade level were selected, which made it possible for intact groups to be surveyed. The motivation of the administration to accomplish the survey also helped a great deal. As

far as we are concerned, and as far as we know, there was no difficulty in carrying out the survey.

Analysis of Data

The questionnaire data were summarized to some degree by the Mental Health Center and then sent to the HumRRO staff for analysis. There was no real difficulty in the analysis. There were possibly some weaknesses in interpretation, for example in knowing how significant areas actually were that were viewed positively and negatively. There is a need for some standard of comparison across several schools. Also of some concern is the difficulty to relate information obtained with the demographic information form to the questionnaire data. (If one can't use the demographic information very extensively we would wonder about the time that it took to gain that information.)

Significant Factors -- Demographic Information Form

The administrators are concerned about the attitudes of the students being somewhat negative without enough assistance by administration and staff to change these attitudes. They are also somewhat concerned about the deficiency in achievement and motivation, that is, there is not enough work on the part of staff or students to pursue excellence in academic achievement.

There is sufficient petty-theft occurring in the school to be of concern. Also the administration generally feels that there is not nearly enough help in working with children who have need for personal counseling.

On the positive side the administration feels that they have excellent teachers and that there is a good attitude among staff members. They also feel that the students in general are of excellent quality.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

Teachers were significantly concerned about disciplinary problems with their students. A general area of concern was in administrative problems. There was also concern on the part of teachers that there was not enough counseling available to students for personal problems. The class size was also deemed to be a significant problem by the staff.

The administration felt that it had problems in getting new programs installed where teachers were exhibiting a good deal of resistance. Also there was some disagreement shown in handling student misbehaviors where, perhaps, the administration felt that students ought to be given more latitude than teachers were willing to give.

Finally, the students were concerned over the use of alcohol and drugs in school.

On the positive side, community problems are rated low at this school, indicating a pretty good feeling toward the community. This also is true of the relations between the school and the community. Another positive point was the relationship between the administration and the students. This was rated favorably by students. (See Figure.)

Reception of Data

The administration received the survey data in a positive manner. They examined the data with an attitude of using the information that was available to them. The faculty became involved in at least two faculty meetings in discussions of the survey information.

Interpretations of the Data

There was agreement to work out programs to change the attitudes of students in a positive way. There was a need to involve the teaching staff with the administration in planning new programs and innovations. Also it was decided that there was a need to provide personal counseling to students in need. There was a specific emphasis on help for children who were designated as potential dropouts. Another need was to provide programs to improve study habits of students.

Plans for Intervention

A program was designed to involve the total staff in developing goals and objectives for the school programs. This resulted in a staff representative committee coming up with three major goals for implementation for the school year, which were presented to the administration. They accepted and implemented these programs. The three programs that they came up with were a 20 minute forum, a program for potential dropouts, and a study skills improvement program for students.

A program has been initiated to improve student attitudes. This program involves groups of students meeting every morning at the beginning of the school day for 20 minutes to discuss school rules, group or personal

concerns, general orientation and communication skills, and relationships. Every student in the school is assigned to one of these groups.

The dropout prevention program has been initiated with the idea that specific teachers will be assigned to potential dropouts to work with them, to provide motivation, and productive skills that will help them to be more successful in school. One of the innovative possibilities here is that if they can keep students in school at a higher rate of attendance, they will get extra state funds made available through higher attendance by these students. These funds might be used in various ways including direct payment to a teacher, payment to a student, or purchasing of teaching materials. In this program the teacher actually contracts for specific goals relative to behaviors of the students they are working with.

How It's Going

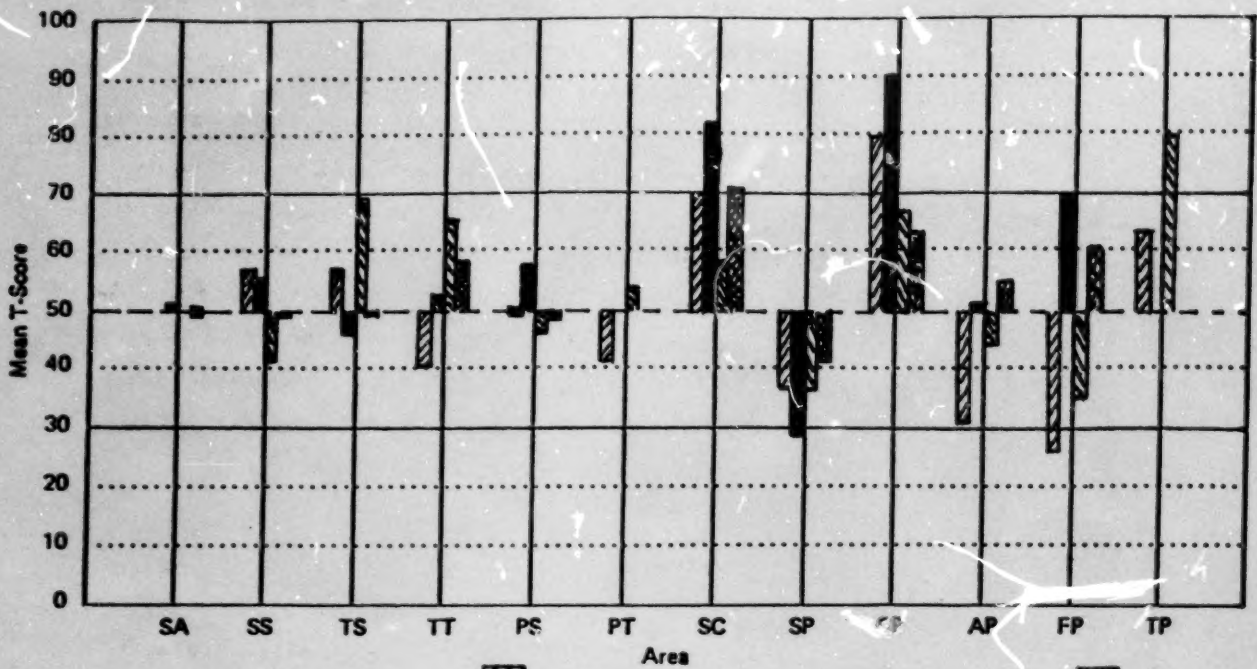
To date most of these programs have been implemented and the administrators seem determined to make them work. Staff seem to be following through with those commitments they have made. The most visible program, the forum daily meetings, are being held on a regular basis and there will be a consultation effort by the consultant from the Mental Health to help those teachers who find themselves in a new kind of role as group counselor.

So far the students' reaction to the forum idea is generally positive. Students who have teachers who relate well and handle group situations well, are enjoying it very much. Students seem to like the idea of being able to discuss in a freer climate school policies, procedures, and general school communications.

It appears that all the programs that have been designed resulting from our survey will continue throughout the year. The biggest program, that of the forum which opened with a general orientation to the rules and expectations of the school for students, appears to have some permanency. A curriculum is being developed with the faculty and staff and a consultant from the Mental Health Center on the techniques of general communication. This program will continue throughout the remainder of the school year. Teachers who are carrying the responsibility for potential dropouts seem to be experiencing success and picking up on the program well. There also seems to be better attendance by those students they are working with.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile

School _____ Date _____



HumRRO W-Form 3

Staff South

Students South

Staff 10 Schools

Students 10 Schools

REPORT ON AN OPEN, INNOVATIVE SCHOOL

Joan Rosenblatt, Ph.D.
Coordinator, Consultation and Education
Tucson East Community Mental Health Center, Arizona

Description of School and Community

The school surveyed in this report is a Junior High School - a 7th and 8th grade school in a southwestern state. It is one of the newest in the District, and we have worked with it from the time it opened. It is situated at the edge of the school district in an area as yet undeveloped, and almost all of the students are bused to the school from the surrounding areas. A very attractive, modern school, it boasts an unusual open plan with flexibility for team teaching and the use of bold colors and modern furnishings. At the time of the Survey, the grounds were incomplete and lacking plants.

Access to the School

The Mental Health Center has consulted at the school for the past two years. Our impression of the school has been very positive. The staff and administrators are unusually receptive to intervention from our Center and eager for innovative ideas for the classroom and for developing and helping students.

However, the school's staff and administrators and some district administrators feel there are problems in the school; for example, that staff do not get along well with one another, that the community is not supportive of the school's innovative programs, that the students are not pleased with the program.

Reception to Proposed Survey

The school Principal and staff were eager for the survey and gave us 100% cooperation in conducting it. The interview, using the Demographic Information Form, was conducted with the Principal in November 1974 and took approximately one hour to complete. The questionnaire was distributed to the school staff on the same date.

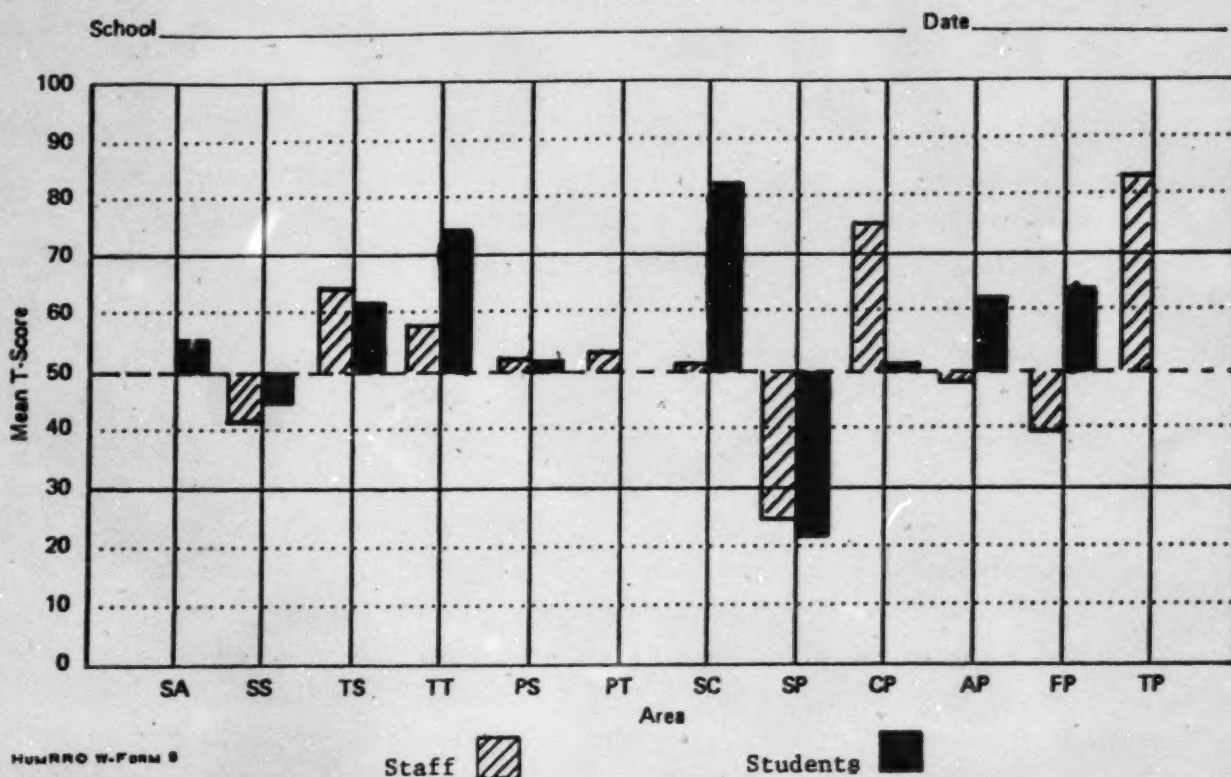
At their request, they completed the questionnaire in their free time and returned it within the next day and a half. The student sample was also completed in November. The staff chose an 8th grade class of 50 students whom they felt were reasonably serious and a cross section of the students. Forty-nine of the students returned the forms. Six of these students left up to half of the questions unanswered, questions at the end of the survey form.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

Summary of Staff and Student Responses and a Profile of the results of the Survey follow. These results can be compared with the Goffard, Taylor and Vineberg results showing averages for ten Junior High Schools.¹

What was surprising to the members of the Center staff who consult with other local schools is that this school did not show more outstanding problem areas. Indeed, only one T-score mean was "significantly" (20 points) different from the average of 50 in the negative direction. (See Figure 1)

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys -- Profile



¹See Goffard, et al in the Introduction. 110

However, over one-third of the teacher items had T-scores above 70 (See Table 1); overall teachers did seem quite positive about the school.

**School Problem Area Surveys:
Summary of Staff and Student Responses**

Staff		Student		Staff		Student		Staff		Student	
Item	T	Item	T	Item	T	Item	T	Item	T	Item	T
		1	48	25	53			51	61		
		2	63	26	62			52	68		
		3	35	27	34			53	88	41	66
		4	48	28	76			54	68		
		5	75	29	42			55	72		
		6	65	30	55			56	83		
		SA 6	56	PT 6	54			57	57		
1	37	7	50	31	68	28	84	58	84	42	36
2	5	8	16	32	37	29	79	59	92		
3	83	9	75	33	53			CP 9	75	CP 2	51
4	42	10	45	34	68			60	-6	43	53
5	49	11	27	35	42			61	44	44	66
6	34	12	59	36	40			62	76	45	62
SS 6	42	SS 6	45	SC 6	51	SC 2	82	63	36		
7	57	13	73	37	-12			64	44		
8	44	14	46	38	-12	30	18	65	64	46	71
9	79	15	71	39	42	31	37	66	81	47	57
10	73	16	64	40	44	32	42	AP 7	48	AP 5	62
11	76	17	61	41	71	33	69	67	70	48	61
12	61	18	48	42	-10	34	9	68	7	49	66
TS 6	65	TS 6	61	43	-44	35	-25	FP 2	39	FP 2	64
13	57	19	84	44	16	36	6	69	77		
14	38			45	40	37	49	70	88		
15	37			46	62			TP 2	83		
16	34	20	88	47	89			SUMMARY OF MEAN Ts			
17	81			48	27	38	18	Staff		Students	
18	92			49	-23	39	-18			SA	56
		21	49	50	27	40	24	SS	42	SS	45
TT 6	57	TT 3	74	SP 14	25	SP 11	21	TS	65	TS	61
19	72	22	43					TT	57	TT	74
20	70	23	69					PS	53	PS	52
21	23							PT	54		
		24	55					SC	51	SC	82
22	40							SP	25	SP	21
23	64	25	40					CP	75	CP	51
24	48	26	55					AP	48	AP	62
		27	52					FP	39	FP	64
PS 6	53	PS 6	52					TP	83		

Students and teachers agreed that Student Problems was the primary problem area. The lowest T-scores on the Student survey (See Table 1) are in this area, particularly vandalism (item 34), drugs (item 36), delinquency (item 38), profanity (item 39), and cheating (item 30). The low T-scores on the Teacher Survey were on the number of students who don't like going to school and don't do their school work (item 2), class size (item 68), discipline (item 60), loose or lax policies on student behavior which foster disorderliness and disorganization (item 21), and underachievement (item 38), cheating (item 38), vandalism (item 42), and drugs (item 44).

Teachers also reported low T-scores on items in the area of Teacher-Teacher relationships and, in this school this seems related to conflicts and disagreements among the staff on innovative programs: disagreements among the staff on the proper educational goals for the school (item 14), disagreements on the proper balance between traditional and innovative approaches to teaching (item 15), and communication among the school staff (item 16).

Out of 49 questions, 15 comparable student-teacher items showed a difference of 15 points or more. Three of these items are clearly in a different direction below or above the average range: Item 32. The way the people in this neighborhood feel about the school (students 79 and teachers 37); Item 58. Busing to improve racial balance (students 36 and teachers 84); and Item 68. Class size (students 66 and staff 7).

In the summary of mean T's, there are some 15 point differences between student and teacher mean T's - School-Community Relationships (SC), Community Problems (CP), Facility Problems (FP), and Teacher Characteristics and Relationships (TT).

Reception of data

Results were reviewed with the Principal in December 1974 and with the staff in January 1975. The general results were not as positive as expected. On the other hand, numerous problem areas had not been identified. Student problems were clear and the staff had not been aware of the students' perceptions of problems in this area.

After the discussion of the results with the staff, the Principal directly approached us for ideas on resolving some staff problems and very openly spoke with us about these issues. He apparently feels that communication between him and the staff needs improvement, that, at times, the staff are abrupt or "unkind" to one another and, at other times, they are not honest and direct. He indicated that teachers and administration need to improve their relationships and openly spoke with us about these issues. We believe that the use of the instruments led to a closer relationship with our agency and a more trusting one.

Interpretations of the Data

The problems discussed by the staff with us and listed by the Principal on the DIF were very similar to the results of the survey. The staff and Principal identified the following problems:

1. thievery
2. profanity
3. vandalism
4. transportation

The staff felt the first three student problems were interrelated and delineated an additional problem.

5. the school's educational philosophy

These problems are very much in agreement with the results of the survey.

Transportation, as mentioned, is a problem constrained by the school's location at the edge of the city with sparse housing surrounding the school.

In our discussion with the staff, the teachers focused on the school's educational philosophy and seemed to feel some of the student problems, and certainly the solution of these problems, are related to the educational philosophy. The school utilizes team teaching and innovative programs for classes a great deal (as compared with other Junior High Schools in the District). Most of the teachers believe that their class assignments and lesson plans are less structured than the usual class in the school district. They have not discussed this issue in relation to responsibilities of the students in their school. Continued discussion of this issue seems needed, and the teachers and Principal were encouraged to do this as an important first step.

How It's Going

Following the survey, our Mental Health Center chose to present a program of classroom presentations on mental health and also, to train teachers for future presentations on their own. In addition, we coordinated with the school personnel for parent education programs and staff training programs as requested by the staff, parents and Principal. Since this Junior High School is receptive to innovative programs, our hope was that other surrounding schools would become more receptive to our intervention in their schools if we were successful here. This has started to take place.

Our Center's Director of Consultation/Education met with the Principal and the school guidance counselors at the school about once a month. The Coordinator of Consultation/Education, who is a Clinical Psychologist, and five of the Center's Social Workers participated in the programs presented and one of these Social Workers usually attended the monthly meetings. We usually met for an hour. We are not consulting with this school this school year, but, as we had hoped, our work here led to requests from other schools in the area for similar programs.

The Survey was very helpful to us. It confirmed our staff's observations about the school and failed to confirm the general belief in the District that the school was not facing up to its problems with its innovative programs.

A SURVEY RESULTING IN THREE DIFFERENT INTERVENTIONS

Lenore Flax Walker, Ed.D
Community Mental Health Center
Rutgers Psychiatric Institute, New Jersey¹

Description of School and Community

The community in which this survey was done is a small Central Atlantic city. It can be characterized as consisting of a predominately white, liberal, verbal, professional group of people who highly value their educational system. Many residents are faculty members at a nearby university and medical school. There are numerous lawyers, medical doctors, dentists, psychologists, and other professionals living in this town. A wealthy entrepreneur class also lives here.

A small, but growing number of poorer families which includes blacks (6%), and first generation foreign born, often speaking a different native language (such as Greek) have moved to the town.

The town is less than two square miles in area. It is across the river from an urban city. Many residents work in New York City which is about 50 miles (and one hour in commuting time) away. Homes are generally old and fairly close together with a few large apartment complexes and several smaller ones mixed together.

A main street filled with active shops bisects the town and it is considered more desirable to live on one side than the other because of the more expensive homes, tree lined streets, professional neighbors and the "better" elementary school. One small section of town is considered the "bad" side and as would be expected, the poor families live there.

The elementary school which serves this poorer section is eligible for E.S.E.A. Title I funding and it has a significant number of educationally disadvantaged children. One interviewee commented that families from this section of town are rarely seen walking or shopping in the many stores of the main street. It is probably significant that

¹Presently, Dr. Walker is located in Denver, Colorado where she is Assistant Professor at Colorado Woman's College and is also engaged in private practice.

their children are often seen as alienated in the high school. There is an elementary school that serves the more affluent section of the community. A third school has a more heterogeneous population.

It is interesting that the group intelligence tests administered in the fourth grade indicate a mean IQ of 125 for the "better" school, a mean IQ of 105 for the E.S.E.A. school and a mean IQ of 115 for the third one.

In general, the town can be characterized as being in the middle socioeconomic level. Five years ago, the mean income for the town's population was in the top 75% for the county. This is one of the more affluent counties of the central part of the state. Recently, the average income of its residents has fallen to the 50th percentile within the county, placing it at \$12,000 per year.

There is also a declining school population. Enrollment figures during the 1974-75 school year, when this study was conducted, indicated that approximately 2500 students were registered in the public school system. The district has been noted for its outstanding and comprehensive special education programs, its early identification process and innovative curriculums. There are also several private and parochial schools that children from this community and surrounding communities attend. The declining enrollment rate is, however, a serious problem for the schools to contend with. They find themselves with very small classes in the early elementary school grades and larger classes at the middle and high school levels.

In middle school, where this study was done, the children in the town come together for their schooling for the first time. The school contains grades six through eight, with a total enrollment of 652 students. There are 38 teachers on the staff with 5% of the teachers being Black, and 95% being White.

There has always been a heavy emphasis on academics and the majority of students do well in this type of a program. However, it is inadequate for a growing number of students. This has been most visibly demonstrated at the high school with disturbances that have had both racial and socioeconomic class overtones. Several incidents involved the police and in two separate cases, charges of police

brutality were claimed by the angry community. In fact, the outcry has resurrected an inactive human relations committee and all community groups are exploring ways of preventing such incidents in the future. School administrators and staff have been open to community dialogue and many are concerned with finding alternatives to meet needs. However, few want to jeopardize the strong academic program. The middle school is the appropriate place to begin to deal with some of these issues with the goal of preventing alienation and other mental health problems.

The Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) had been in existence for two years when this study was begun. This school district has been a delightful place to work on implementing preventive mental health consultation programs. School staff and CMHC relationships within all levels of both system's hierarchies have been excellent. The superintendent of schools has supported development of innovative mental health programs and has encouraged school personnel to make use of the consultants' services. The Special Services Team consisting of School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Learning Disability Consultants, and a School Psychiatrist, is sophisticated in consultation skills and has traditionally been supported within the school system and the community. Good personal relationships exist between the Special Services Team and CMHC consultants and a collaborative, problem solving atmosphere prevails.

Although the community supports its education services and its mental health services both through active use of these services and through active financial support, it has been slow to recognize some of the changing educational values. There is a growing area within the town that places less emphasis on academic education and more interest in vocational training. Although the school staff and community are open and supportive of mental health interventions within the schools, they will not permit change at the expense of a good academic education. This seems to be one of the greatest problem areas that we have identified within this school system. The schools are simply not meeting the needs of a large population of students,

particularly students who are not interested in going on to college at this time. It is often these students who get into trouble at school and who are seen as a hindrance to other students who are interested in learning.

Access to the School

The CMHC has had an educational outreach division with responsibilities for consultation to the school in this community. There have been about two and one-half years of client-centered consultation around cases and several other preventive mental health consultation programs within the several schools, including the high school. The year before this study, a very successful intervention program in which high school teachers were trained in crisis intervention skills had taken place. The success of this project had filtered through the school system's grapevine and the middle school staff was quite eager and anxious to participate in a similar kind of program. (There is nothing like prior success to facilitate entry to school systems.)

The usual procedure that this school system prefers before a consultation program is planned is the following: CMHC consultants and Child Study Team members discuss intervention priorities for a particular school. (In this case, the questionnaire was seen as a way of facilitating, ordering and identifying such priorities.) Then the school principal is consulted for his or her input. If the school principal and the Child Study Team members and the CMHC consultant all agree on priorities or at least on trying to identify priorities for possible intervention, then the superintendent of schools is contacted with a written proposal. In this case, all the levels of the system's hierarchy were interested in participating and evaluating the results of this survey. There was particular interest on the superintendent's part and the CMHC's part to see if the data could also be used in an evaluative function to see if there was indeed change after intervention projects were completed.

Reception to Proposed Survey

The principal of the middle school was quite receptive to the use of this survey. He wanted intervention services from the CMHC and felt that this would be one way of gaining such services. He personally arranged to have participating students excused from their first two gym classes so they could complete the questionnaire data. Therefore, the students were selected from two gym classes with 25 eighth grade students each. Forty-seven out of a possible 50 were present. The gym classes were chosen because they were composed of a heterogeneous and representative sample of the eighth grade students in that school.

The principal's support was also noted in that he was able to spend over an hour of uninterrupted time with the interviewer to respond to the Demographic Information Form. As anyone who has worked in a school knows, uninterrupted administrative time is a rare luxury or gift.

The one difficulty that we did have was the inability of the staff to meet all together in one place for the time needed to complete the questionnaires. Therefore, the consultant sat in the teacher's faculty room for the entire six-hour day in order to meet with the various groups of teachers during their preparation periods or on their lunch periods. The staff members were interested in the survey, but mostly from the viewpoint that they did want mental health services from the CMHC in their school and they thought their participation in the survey was a way of insuring that they would receive such services.

Ease of Survey

Because of the inability to schedule teacher's as a group, the major difficulty in administering the survey was its time consuming nature and the need to continually explain its purpose throughout the day. (However, I did gain a great deal of additional information just from sitting in the teacher's room all day.) There was also a great deal of suspiciousness at first as to how the results would be reported and to whom. These were problems that could be overcome in this district, but in other more closed systems that our CMHC services, it would have proven to have been

a stumbling block. The difficulties here were resolved by emphasizing the experimental nature of the instruments and assuring anonymity in the reporting from.

The eighth grade students were quite cooperative in filling out the survey forms. It seems that they really did enjoy getting out of their gym period for that day. In addition, the few students who had difficulty in completing the questionnaire, mostly because of lack of motivation or attention, were encouraged to finish by the principal. I suspect that some of the children who exhibit more deviant behavior would not have participated in the survey if they had not felt that the principal was really asking for their cooperation. There seemed to be a warm and positive relationship between some of these students and the principal.

Some of the students had difficulty in interpreting some of the words on the questionnaire. This included words like "profanity," "extracurricular" and "vandalism." Many of the students also requested a "does not apply" category because they felt there were some questions they were being asked that truly did not apply in their school. One example was the question on the efficacy of busing children in order to achieve a racial balance. Busing is needed in this district only for handicapped children.

Many of the teachers felt that the questions were too negative in that they specified problems rather than analyzing strengths as well as weaknesses. There was a tendency to feel that their school was not a problem school, but rather a school that was good and they only wanted to make it a little bit better.

Analysis of Data

The questionnaire data were analyzed by the HumRRO research staff. It was disappointing to us that we were unable to gain access to our keypunch operator and our own computer to analyze the data. However, HumRRO efficiency was greatly appreciated and certainly facilitated the interpretation of the data. Once the print-out sheets and the questionnaires were returned to us, we found the student profile sheet and the summary of staff and student responses sheet most useful in plotting

out T-scores and looking at our significant problem and no-problem areas. The greatest difficulty that was encountered was the time it took to really sit down and review the data in detail. Somehow when working in a CMHC, research is always given a low priority and we often move from one crisis to another without taking the time that's necessary to evaluate what we've done.

Significant Factors -- Demographic Information Form

The most significant factors that were noted in the Demographic Information Form were the statistics that indicated the changing socio-economic level. Not only was the community becoming less dominated by professionally oriented residents, but the mean income of families was decreasing.

Although the principal of the school had all of the data that was asked for on the demographic form, he indicated that it was a useful review for him to put these data in a consistent format. (Each of the questions is included on the E.S.E.A. Title funding request forms.)

The contents of the DIF did not include some additional questions that we wanted to ask as consultants from the CMHC. Therefore, we expanded the DIF to include such information as the financing of the entire school system, the structure of the school board, and some indication of the kinds of programs that were seen as valuable by the administration in the school system.

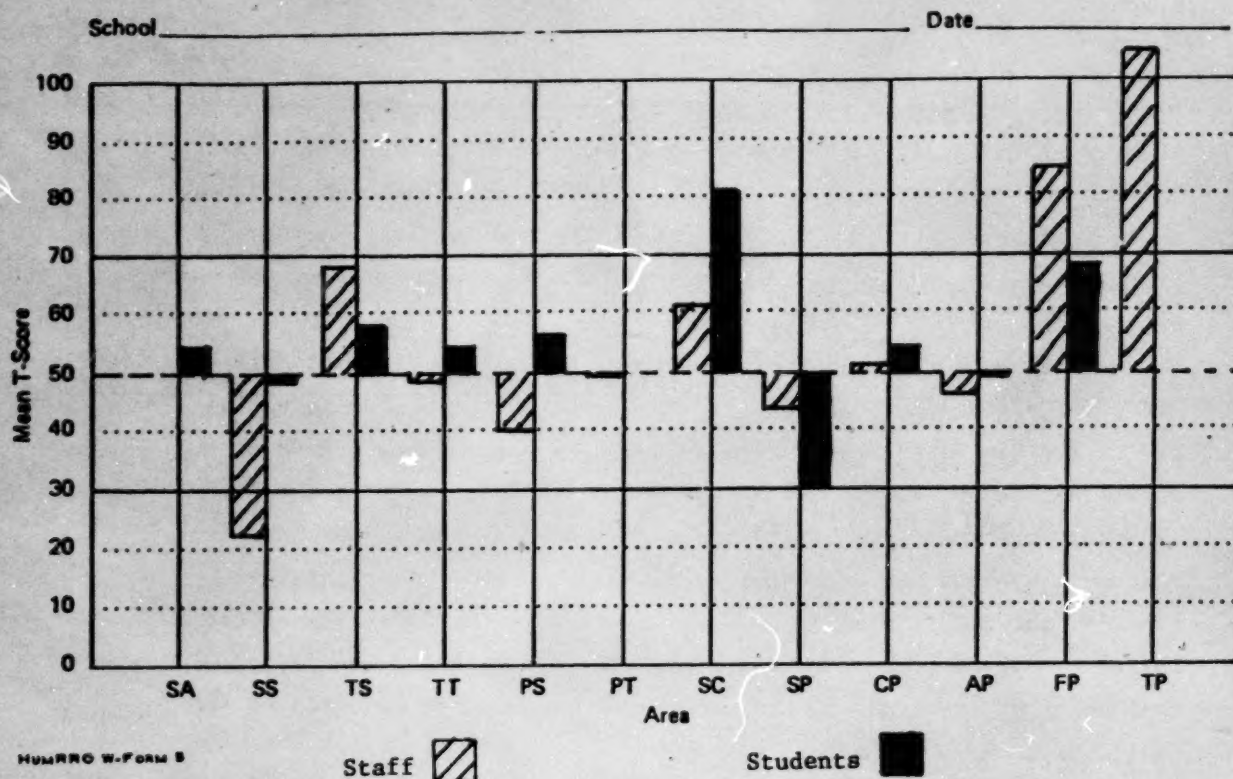
Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

In simply eye-balling the data, it appeared that some problem categories contained items falling on both the positive and negative side of the overall mean (set at 50 by the T-score transformations). That is to say that both teachers and students would rate some items very high and some items very low within a problem area, resulting in an overall average that tended towards the mean.

Overall, teachers rated problems as less severe than did students. Students tended to agree less amongst themselves than did teachers. While the teachers generally presented unimodal response patterns for items, students were more likely to show some bipolarity in their responses.

There was only one area where there was a significant (two standard deviations or more) difference between the relative weightings of problems between students and teachers in different directions. (See Figure 1.)

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



This is in the area of Student Characteristics and Relationships. In this area the teachers perceived more problems than did the students. Agreement occurred within this area on the item, "students who don't like going to school and who don't do their school work."

Some difference between students and teachers was reflected in the relative rating of Facility Problems and School Community Relations. However, in analyzing the individual questions that make up these scales, it must be noted that there are only two items for students. Some extreme problems that were perceived on individual items are not reflected in the factor scores. For example, in spite of an overall favorable factor score rating, the sense that teachers and students do not have sufficient respect

for one another is seen as a problem by both teachers and students. Similarly, in the area of innovative teaching, teachers find that lack of adequate agreement among teachers on an appropriate balance between innovative and traditional curriculums has created a problem.

Although teachers perceived more problems than students in the area of Student Characteristics and Relationships, students tended to see more problems in the area of Student Problems.

Reception of Data

All who reviewed the data were impressed with its congruence with the perceptions of school system personnel, child study system personnel and CMHC personnel with regard to the difficulties that exist in this school. There was a significant lack of defensiveness accompanying the reception of the data, particularly by the teachers and by the principal. Perhaps some of this had to do with the fact that we presented it in a positive rather than a negative light. We, of course, reviewed the problem areas that they had identified on their questionnaire data, and also the areas that were seen as strong points. An intervention program was built using both of the areas -- both the supportive strong points and the more difficult problem areas that needed to be overcome.

Interpretations of the Data

The data were interpreted according to the twelve factors that the instrument yielded. This information was then compared with the information that was gathered by the DIF and the informal interviews with key personnel in the school and in the Community Mental Health Center. There was an amazingly high degree of similarity through using all assessment devices. The most important problems that were seen within this school were the following:

a. Student Characteristics and Relationships - this was not seen to be so much of a problem by the students as by the teachers. Teachers tended to see the problems as being the students' fault rather than looking within themselves or into the interrelationship of the school environment and the students. When given specific behavioral descriptions, the students could identify problems and were then able, under the category "student problems" to identify cheating, vandalism,

theft, profanity, delinquency, and violence or threats of violence as important obstacles to learning in their school. Neither students nor teachers see the dropout rate as a significant problem. Students do see student underachievement as a significant problem. Teachers saw friction, hostilities between loners and deviants as causing the most trouble. They saw capable kids as doing o.k. in the school.

b. Teacher Characteristics and Relationships - Teachers have difficulties in obtaining consensus whether to stress innovative versus traditional goals of education. The students saw teachers as bored with their teaching although the teachers denied this.

c. Community Problems and Ethnic Tensions - Ethnic tensions are seen as a significant problem by both the students and the teachers. This is not unexpected considering that the high school had been beset by problems that had racial overtones to them within the month prior to the administration of these questionnaires. Teachers see the changing neighborhood and the fact that many students speak non-standard English also as significant problems.

Some of the positive strengths that were revealed from the analysis included both students and teachers as viewing the administration in a positive light. However, the interpretation of these data has to be cautious because there is again a bimodal distribution that is obvious. Both teachers and students see discipline as their biggest problem, yet at the same time they both saw the relaxed dress code as representing a positive working relationship within the school. The physical building is seen as attractive, and no problems are evidenced around class size. This is due to the fact that classes are relatively small. The teaching staff is a very stable one with little teacher turnover and little teacher absenteeism. The average daily attendance for students is also quite high. No one has identified that as a problem.

It is interesting to note that the students were more prone to see violence or threats of violence and delinquency as problems in the school than did the staff or faculty. There seems to be an underlying current of the possibility of coercion between students. Perhaps this is why both students and teachers have requested more discipline. The one area where there was some surprise was that the school nurse and the school

medical services were seen as totally inadequate by the students. The teachers were totally unaware of the students' perception of this as a problem. Administrative steps were to be instituted to correct this problem.

Plans for Intervention

Several intervention plans were put into effect after this survey was completed. The first was to organize a workshop with the staff around issues of communication with youth. The topic chosen by the staff was "Locating and Treating Children in Crisis." The specific goal was to train teachers to be sensitive and respond to youth under stress. Specifically, this was done through participation of the CMHC consultant staff, the administration, the guidance counselor, the faculty of the middle school and the special services personnel.

The format of the workshop included two intensive all day sessions with as many building staff as possible. These days were then followed by bi-weekly one and a half hour meetings that took place with small groups. The CMHC consultant staff preferred to co-lead small groups with a member of the school system's Special Services Team. It gives them greater visibility and they are usually seen in a more helpful consultant role afterwards. We also find that it facilitates a collaborative consultative role between the CMHC consultants and the special services personnel. Several pre-workshop planning meetings were held. An experimental approach coupled with simulation, gaming, communication skill development, video-tape replays, role playing, and didactic materials were integrated within this workshop. There was a healthy balance between discussion and presentation of new material.

School personnel are either given release time from school to participate or given a choice of accepting substitute teacher salary for a weekend day, or inservice salary credit that the district will apply to their pay rate differential. The projects are funded by both the school system and the CMHC. Funding has been an area that has been difficult to work out to our satisfaction. It seems impossible to find a way for preventive mental health consultation programs to bring in

the revenue that direct client service does. The workshop has been evaluated but the results of the evaluation are not yet available.

A second program that was introduced by the school and the CMHC was particularly designed to meet the needs of the community to reduce some of the ethnic tensions and to begin to explore some of the educational values within the community. Parent-teacher groups, led by mental health consultants during non-school hours, were developed for eight week sessions. These parent-teacher groups were highly successful, they were organized around humanistic values clarification goals and were quite well attended. The mix of having teacher and parent in the same group worked out very well. The mental health consultants also wanted to have some students in the groups as well. However, both parents and teachers were un-willing to accept this. This project has also been evaluated, but the results are not available at this time.

These groups met on a weekly basis for approximately two hours and were led by professional consultants from the community mental health center. They were funded by both the community and the mental health center. Parents and teachers were not asked to contribute any funding.

During the summer, it became obvious that many of the students had no place to go and nothing to do. The CMHC set up teen-age education groups that included students from both the middle school and the high school. They were invited to participate at the CMHC in a program designed to educate them about mental health and about helping skills. The groups were experimental in nature rather than didactic and students had the opportunity to interact with each other and with the CMHC consultants during this time. They met on a weekly basis at the Community Mental Health Center. This project was funded by the Center.

How It's Going

The long term goals are to process issues around the changing pupil population with a stable teaching staff. There are many fewer academically oriented students now and yet over 68% of the faculty have been at this school for over five years. They must learn how to change their teaching modes so as to make their classes relevant and interesting for students who are not interested in going on to college. Vocational training

needs to be developed. Intermediate steps include informal consultation with special services, with guidance counselors, with administrators. These are already underway and going well.

CMHC consultants have been invited to take part in informal classroom observations, formal in-service programs, case conferences with special service teams and community meetings with the township's human relations committee. In fact, the requests far exceed the ability of the consultation team to deliver such services. The most difficult task for the CMHC is to learn how to set priorities and to divide the finite limit of its resources. This is especially true as our economic funding is beginning to be cut back and our ability to provide indirect services becomes diminished as the demand for direct client services becomes more of a burden.

It is really difficult to forecast whether consultation programs will be able to continue in either this or in other schools. The most salient threat to the loss of such consultation programs is funding. A second dilemma is that as consultants we have been particularly tardy in not developing more sophisticated assessment devices that clearly establish what needs and what priorities we are setting, what kinds of interventions we are designing, what our goals are, and how we are to measure them effectively to show that such intervention projects do have an impact. Unless we do this, I suspect that the forecast for the future will be much dimmer.

TWO SURVEYS IN ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

SCHOOL B

Robert Beidler, MSW¹
Clinic Director of Alcoholism Services
The Northwest Center, Pennsylvania

[Editors' Note: An Introduction and Description of the Community appears with the report on school A. See pages 56 to 61.]

Description of School B

School B is a parish school serving students in grades K-8. It is located in a well established, black working class, middle community. This is a very new section for Northwest Philadelphia. Most of the housing was built after World War II, (in the 1950's) and consists of substantial red brick row and larger semi-detached houses. There are also sections of older housing on the west side of the parish. The parents who choose to use school B tend to be non-college educated, upperly mobile working class blacks as opposed to the better educated more middle class blacks who also live in this community.

Use of the school is restricted to children who live within the boundaries of the parish; an area which is limited to a few square miles. The school is run by a conservative community of religious nuns. About one half of the teachers are nuns. All of the teachers are white. Ninety-five percent of the three hundred and forty-six students are black. Few of the children are from families which are traditionally Catholic.

Access to the School

The Mental Health Center had provided general consultation services to the school the year before the field trial. A close relationship already existed between the Center and the school teachers and principal. Access was fairly simple. The consultant of the Center's staff who had been working with the school contacted the principal. She agreed and assured the appropriate

¹The survey reported here was carried out by a consultant other than the author.

cooperation. Though school B is a part of the Philadelphia Catholic School System, no further permission was required since each parish school maintains a certain autonomy within the system.

Ease of Survey

The Demographic Information Form was filled out by the principal in December 1974 and took about one half hour to complete. The questionnaire was administered to the school staff, also in December, and took twenty minutes to complete. The questionnaire was administered to the student sample at the same time and was completed in one half hour. The sample consisted of one class of the eighth grade. The Center analyzed the material without the use of a computer.

Significant Factors - Demographic Information Form

Most of the significant factors noted in the Demographic Information Form have already been dealt with in the description of the school and the community.

Significant Factors - Questionnaires

The students at this school expressed several areas of concern regarding the general acceptability of their school. Among these concerns were: not enough extra curricular activities (T-score "1"); getting students to show some school spirit (T-score "9"); too much noise and confusion (T-score "4"); and the way the school is run (T-score "16").

Staff was in the neutral zone but students saw the principal-student relationship as a problem (Staff T-score "42"; Students T-score "25"); Staff was borderline about a feeling in the school that conformity and orderliness are more important than freedom and individuality (Staff T-score "31") however, students express real concern (Student T-score "16"). A similar finding was observed regarding the amount of influence student opinion has on the way the school is run (Student T-score "15"; Staff T-score was in the slightly neutral positive zone at "56").

The Staff are concerned with student underachievement (T-score "10"). (Students state theft more of a problem, in the neutral negative zone at

(T-score "6") than do staff (T-score "40"). Both staff and students find that profanity is not a problem (Staff T-score "53", Student T-score "69").

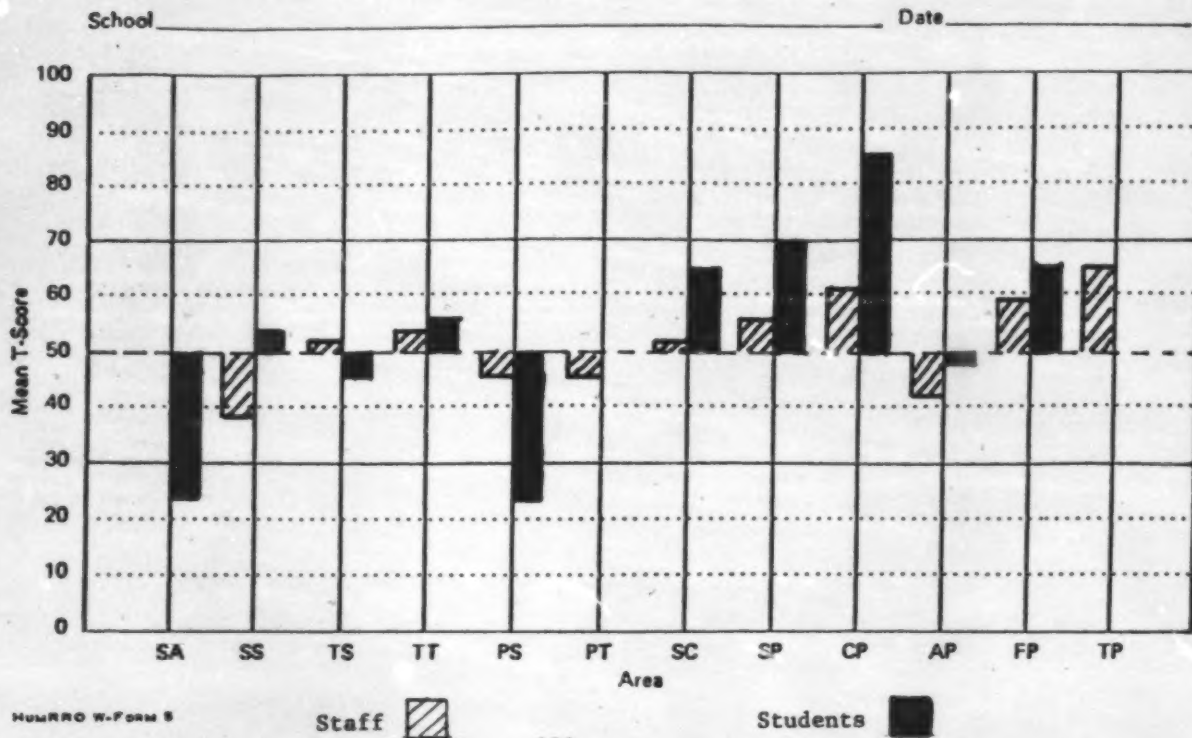
"Ethnic tensions" and "busing to improve racial balance" were viewed by both staff (T-scores at a neutral "48" and at a high positive of "76") and students at high positives of "74" and "98" as no problem at all.

As regards School Community Relationships, both staff and students express positive feelings about the way people in this neighborhood (i.e., school locale) feel about the school (staff "60"; student "69"). The staff also responded on the positive side about the community's satisfaction with the school's ideas, (T-score "63").

The physical condition of school facilities was on the high positive side for both staff and students (staff T-score "76"; student T-score "72").

A graph of the mean T-scores for problem areas (items grouped into rational clusters) is shown as Figure 2.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile



Plans for Intervention

The data were presented to the principal by the consultant. The principal was not unaware of the realities reported. The principal's interpretation was insightful and cogent. As noted earlier in this report, however, the consultant left the Center shortly after the data were collected. Thus, no plans for intervention were formulated. However, as also noted earlier, the newly assigned consultant is actively at work in this catchement area, notably in elementary schools. (See Report on School A.)

A REPORT ON TWO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Michael I. Singer, Ph.D.

Director, Consultation and Education

Concord Area Comprehensive Mental Health Center, Massachusetts

Description of Community

Town A is a middle/upper middle class town about 3/4 of an hour's drive from a large northeastern city. The town has experienced rapid growth over the past 10 to 15 years, doubling its size to the current 15,000. Over these years many new garden apartments have been built. The town contains a large transient group of young professionals and businessmen. It is at least 99% white, with about equal proportions of liberals and conservatives. There is basically open enrollment with parents being able to choose among the five elementary schools for their children. Because this option is available, the great majority of the children go to school by bus.

SCHOOL M

Brief Description of School

School M, the oldest in town, is an open, experimental school. However it has been functioning as a "pilot" school for only three years. The principal had been hired by the faculty, and was generally very well liked and respected by the staff.

Access to the School

I have been the consultant to this school system for 5 years and spend an average of 6 hours per week within the system. Because of this, I am fairly well accepted within the schools by both administration and staff.

The Survey was introduced to the principals, with the approval of the Superintendent and Pupil Personnel Director, at an administrative committee meeting. Present at this meeting were the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, head of Pupil Personnel, the principals of the elementary schools, and the principals of the regional junior and

senior high schools. I explained the purpose and format of the survey and showed the administrators the forms. Each one made independent decisions as to whether he wished to utilize the survey forms. The principals of two elementary schools, called here schools M and C, requested my time regarding the survey and use of the instruments. The others declined.

Reception to Proposed Survey

The reception to the survey form was very positive on the part of both the principal and the staff. The school faculty is proud of its philosophy of openness and thus saw the survey form as being consistent with this philosophy and potentially providing useful feedback. This spirit of cooperation made administration of the forms quite easy. In the early meetings with the principal, it was decided to get an additional sample, i.e., parents. A cover letter was designed and sent along with the student form of the survey to a random sample of 10 parents from each grade level (K-6). Thirty-nine out of twenty responded. (The same cover letter was sent to parents in both school M & school C, co-signed by both principals). Thus, in this school, there were three populations sampled, the staff, the sixth grade students and a sample of parents for all grade levels. Also the Demographic Information Form was filled out by the principal.

Ease of Survey

It should be noted that some of the items were not too relevant for this age group, but recognizing that the survey forms were meant for older grade levels, there did not appear to be any major difficulty in responding to the forms. Some of the parents did, however, question the appropriateness of some of the items.

Analysis of Data

The data from the three samples -- 1) students, 2) staff, and 3) parents -- were analyzed by computer by HumRRO.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

The survey indicated that the following situations were problematic:

1) School Facility, 2) School-Community Relationships, 3) School Attractiveness and Atmosphere, and 4) Use of Teachers' Time (not one of the formal 12 problem areas). (See Figure at end of section on School M.)

The mean T Scores for the 12 problem areas are given below. The lower the T Score, the more serious the indication of a problem area.

12 Problem Areas	Mean T Scores		
	Staff	Students	Parents
1. School Attractiveness (SA)....	--(a)	20.3 (9)	37.7 (8)
2. Student-Student Characteristics and Relationships (SS).	38.8 (9)	44.3 (7)	49.1 (6)
3. Teacher-Student Relationship (TS).....	67.0 (4)	51.1 (6)	72.5 (2)
4. Teacher-Teacher Characteristics and Relationships (TT).	44.2 (7)	69.0 (3)	70.2 (4)
5. Principal-Student Relationship (PS).....	39.2 (8)	69.8 (2)	70.4 (3)
6. Principal-Teacher Relationship (PT).....	51.6 (5)	--(a)	--(a)
7. School-Community Relationship (SC).....	23.5 (10)	42.6 (8)	13.3 (9)
8. Student Problems (SP).....	68.0 (3)	56.7 (5)	55.9 (5)
9. Community Problems (CP).....	68.5 (2)	83.8 (1)	73.6 (1)
10. Administrative Problems (AP)..	44.4 (6)	63.2 (4)	49.1 (7)
11. Facility Problems (FP).....	-53.0 (11)	-30.5 (10)	-83.0 (10)
12. Teacher Problems (TP).....	73.5 (1)	--(a)	--(a)

The numbers inside the parentheses indicate each respondent group's rank ordering of the problem areas with (1) indicating least problem and (10) or (11) the most problem.

(a) This problem area not considered by this form of the survey.

Facility Problems. All respondents saw this as the school's major problem area. On the staff survey, "Class size" and "The condition of the building and/or the grounds" received T Scores of -95 and -11. On these same items the student Ts were -74 and -153 and the parent Ts were 14 and -13 respectively. In other words, class size and the condition of the building were seen by all respondents as interrelated and serious conditions.

School-Community Relationships. This was the second most problematic area as seen by staff and parents, and seen as only slightly less so by students. On the staff survey Items 31 - 36 addressed this area.

	<u>T Score</u>
31 The way teachers get along with parents	58.0
32 The way people <u>in this neighborhood</u> feel about the school	-11.0
33 Lack of community interest in the schools	41.0
34 Teacher dissatisfaction with the community	27.0
35 Community dissatisfaction with the schools	5.0
36 School policies that conflict with parents' ideas	21.0

On the student-parent survey, "The way people in this neighborhood feel about the school" received a T Score of -5.0 from students and -47 from parents.

School Attractiveness (and Atmosphere). This problem area was not included in the staff questionnaire. Students, and parents to a lesser degree, indicated this area in general as problematic. Items 1 - 6 on the student-parent form addressed this area. One item, however, does stand out as fairly positive among both groups of respondents -- "The way this school is run."

	<u>T Score</u>	
	<u>Students</u>	<u>Parents</u>
1 Not enough school subjects to choose from	44.0	28.0
2 Not enough extracurricular activities	21.0	7.0
3 Getting the students to show some school spirit	-3.0	64.0
4 Too much noise and confusion	-49.0	-13.0
5 A generally unfriendly atmosphere	39.0	79.0
6 The way this school is run	71.0	61.0

Use of Teachers' Time. Strictly speaking, this was not one of the twelve problem areas. However, according to the principal, six items on the staff survey can be considered indicators of this as a problem area.

Staff T Scores

14 Disagreements among the staff on the proper educational goals for the school	9.0
16 Communication among the school staff	-8.0
22 Absence of a schoolwide system for identifying and dealing with students who have special educational needs or problems	-9.0
27 The amount of teachers' time taken up by non-teaching activities	-36.0
57 Divisive community influences	13.0
64 Inadequate remedial services	11.0

The school's greatest areas of strength were seen as:

Community Problems (CP). The school was seen consistently by all respondents as a stable, positive community.

Teacher Problems (TP). Only the staff rated this area. Teacher turnover and teacher absenteeism were not seen as problematic.

Teacher-Student Relationship (TS). Parents rated this area higher than did teachers, who in turn rated it higher than students.

Teacher-Teacher Relationships (TT). Students and parents gave this area almost the same high rating; teachers gave it a rating slightly below the average for all items.

Principal-Student Relationship (PS). Parents and students rated this area fairly high. Teachers rated it considerably lower.

Principal-Teacher Relationship (PT). Parents and students did not rate this area. Teachers gave it an almost exact mid-point, or average rating.

Reception of Data

When the data were received, they were reviewed in detail by the principal and the consultant. Reviews were also held with the staff and the students. The principal wrote a detailed report of the project which he distributed to school Board Members, the Superintendent, other principals, teachers and students.

The reception of the material was very positive. It was seen as helpful in objectifying impressions that people had and in lending support to interventions that were being made. More specifically:

1) The physical plant, which was fairly old and needing renovation, was under study by a school committee. The results of the survey were referred to often in support of the need for renovation.

2) An organizational workshop was already being planned at the time the results came in. Our data supported the need for improving communication among the staff and suggested that actions being taken to improve communication were appropriate.

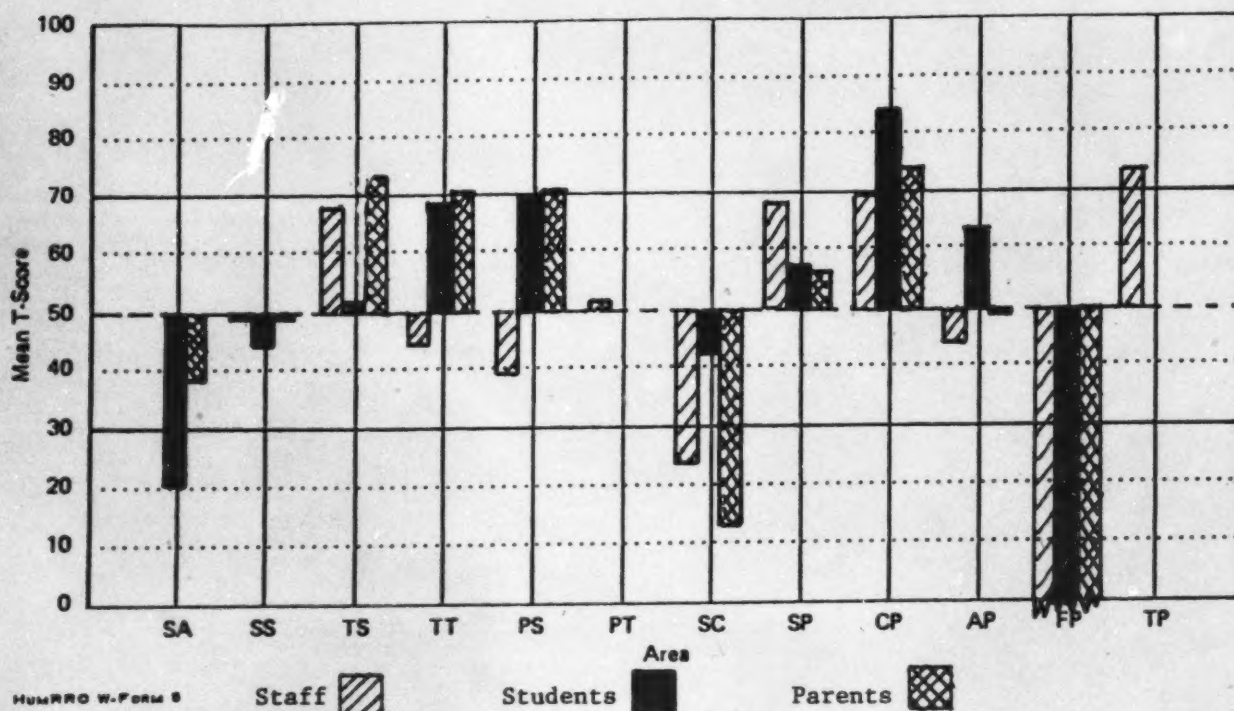
3) The survey was helpful in focusing attention on several specific areas, for example, noise and confusion, extra-curricular activities, etc. Specific attempts were being made to work on improvements in these areas.

This school is planning to repeat the survey in order to see what changes may have taken place.

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys — Profile

School M

Date _____



Brief Description of School

This school is the newest school in the system. The building, which is approximately 3 years old, is quite spacious and very attractive. The majority of the faculty had been together previously in another facility and were moved as a group to the present building when it was completed. The school is located near a major highway, but distant from the other schools, and in fact, from most of the activity of the town. Like the other schools in the system, the great majority of students are bused to school.

Reception to Proposed Survey

After the initial introduction of the instruments at the System Wide Administrative Council Meeting, I met with the principal to discuss the forms and survey procedures. It was clear from the interview with the principal, using the Demographic Information Form, that the principal perceived stress within the school and wanted to bring the problems out where they could be dealt with. The principal was new to this school and system, though experienced as a school administrator. He was receptive from the beginning to the utilization of the survey forms. Some of the faculty were more apprehensive, but by and large, cooperative and willing to participate. A good deal of concern regarding confidentiality was expressed by the teachers.

Ease of Survey

Shortly after the Council meeting, the DIF and the questionnaires were administered. The students were selected randomly from among the sixth grade students. As in school M, the student form was sent with a cover letter to 10 parents of children in each of the 7 grades (K-6). Thirty-six parents responded.

A question was raised about the representativeness of the 6th grade population, which had been chosen because of its more advanced reading ability. To obtain some information on this question, a small random sample of 4th and 5th graders was also given the survey form. They were "walked through" the survey, item by item. Interestingly, the results were very similar to those of the sixth graders.

Significant Factors -- Questionnaires

Neither parents nor students rated any of the 12 problem areas significantly low. The staff saw teacher-teacher problems as most significant and facility problems (class size, specifically) as also significant. (See Figure below.) Among those specific items and clusters that appeared as significant problems were:

- Class size
- Teacher's relationships with other teachers
- Communication among staff
- Principal-staff relationships
- Student behavior (profanity, theft, cutting class)
- Student spirit and morale

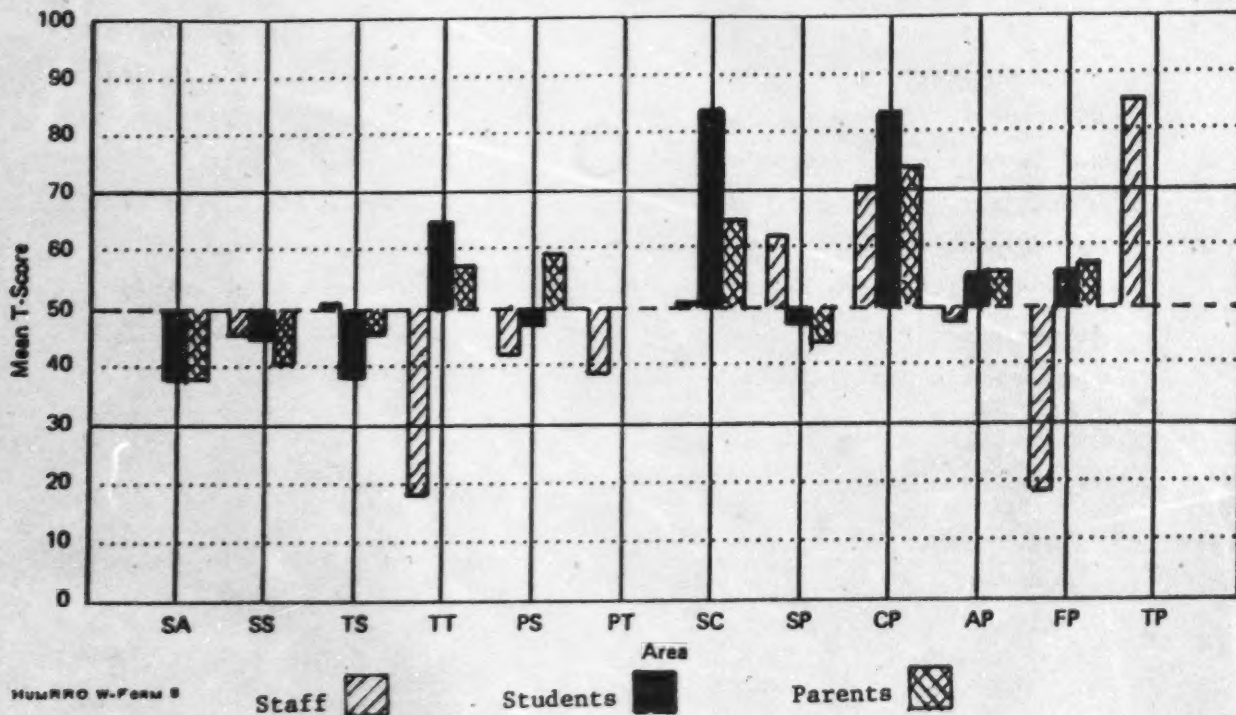
The school strengths clustered broadly in the following areas:

- School community relationships
- Lack of school-community problems
- Teacher stability

HumRRO Problem Area Surveys -- Profile

School C

Date _____



Reception of Data

After discussing the results in detail with the principal, they were presented to the total staff at a special meeting. Most of the results were considered less important than the teacher-teacher and teacher-administrator problems. It was decided almost unanimously to have a series of communication-oriented staff meetings over the next few months with this consultant as facilitator. Four such meetings were held over the remaining two months of the school year. Feelings and issues focused on: a) communication, b) acceptance of others' philosophies and styles, c) administrative decision making, d) teacher participation in decision making, e) the principal's style of relating to the staff.

How It's Going

At the present time (October 1975) it appears that things are going better. Several teachers have left the school. The principal has become clearer in his decision making (though, at the present time, not involving staff as much in administrative issues). The principal is working more with small groups of teachers rather than in larger meetings and feels more comfortable.

It appears that the survey forms were useful in bringing underlying staff conflicts to the surface, where an attempt could be made to deal with them. It also mobilized principal and staff towards trying to reduce tensions. At the present time the continuing role this consultant will take is not clear, some consultative contact will be maintained.

School C, like school M. is planning to re-administer the survey forms in order to see what changes have occurred. This follow-up may be worth considering as a standard part of the process.

PART III

OBSERVATIONS ON THE FIELD TRIALS

Part III contains a summary of some common experiences that were reported by consultants as well as some contrasts in experiences. It also contains a tabulation and brief discussion of staff and student perceptions about their schools. Some suggestions made by the consultants who participated in the conference are presented in the concluding section.

Consultant Experiences

In general the consultants favored the use of the survey instruments and report positively on their experiences with them.

While some specific interventions based upon survey findings did occur, their major effect appears to have been to motivate staff and administration to examine problems more carefully and to confirm opinions about strengths and weaknesses of their schools. In most applications the surveys did create opportunities to discuss and explore problems and differences of opinion about them.

While survey data often came as no surprise to faculty members, they frequently were impressed by the close agreement between themselves and the students about major school issues. Staff members in a number of schools had not appreciated the degree of awareness of the students about problems. As a consequence, staff respect for student opinion was enhanced.

A number of consultants encountered a suspicious or guarded reaction from the faculty. This occurred less frequently with the principals, presumably because the consultants were in the schools with their sanction.

A few reported that the consultant's relationship with a school improved as a result of the survey process.

Students tended to show polarization on more items than staff. Students, of course, may be assumed to have more heterogeneous backgrounds than staff members. At any rate, a great deal of bipolarity may itself be indicative of problems that will not be revealed by the

inspection of mean values.

A few of the consultants questioned the utility of the Demographic Information Form, primarily because they felt they had not been able to utilize the information obtained with it. On the other hand, a few consultants found it extremely useful, one even expanding it to obtain more information about the school and the school system. (More is said about this in the last section of Part III.) Ultimately, the value of the Demographic Information Form depends upon how familiar the consultant is with the many characteristics of the school that the form is designed to identify. While consultants will vary in the way they relate questionnaire data to information obtained with the form, one consultant's report provides a useful model. (See Adams.)

A number of the consultants mentioned plans to readminister the instruments after some time had elapsed in order to evaluate effects of interventions or changes in school conditions. Several also mentioned the interest of other schools in having such a survey carried out for them.

The generality of the items was questioned by at least one principal. He felt some concern about interpreting the meaning of items that might be rated as problems. It should be noted that the items in the questionnaires are intended simply to screen for problems. For example, unfavorable answers to the item -- "The respect teachers and students have for one another" -- would indicate that a problem exists, but does not specify the precise nature of the problem. Several additional items would be needed to specify in detail the nature of the problem. To keep the questionnaire as brief as possible, most items have been written in this general form. Once the problems have been identified generally, their specific nature is to be elaborated in meetings of the consultant with the principal, the staff and, in some cases, the students.

Overview of Average Responses to Areas in Staff and Student Questionnaires

The tabulation below shows the number of schools in which the response of staff, averaged for items in an area, is more positive or negative than the student response. This tabulation is based upon the placement of average T-scores for staff relative to students in the various areas of

the questionnaire that were common to both groups.¹ That is, it is based upon their absolute values only, not on any tests of significance.

TABLE OF AVERAGE STAFF RESPONSES COMPARED TO AVERAGE STUDENT RESPONSES
FOR NINE AREAS OF THEIR QUESTIONNAIRES

(Numbers in parentheses represent inversions, showing that the average response of the student group was placed in opposition to the staff response, i.e., if staff were negative, students were positive and vice versa.)

	Positive Average Response			Negative Average Response		
	Teachers More +	Teachers Less +	Teachers and Students Approximately Same	Teachers More -	Teachers Less -	Teachers and Students Approximately Same
SS	1	1		9 (2)	2	1
TS	12 (5)	1	1			
TT	3 (2)	7		4 (4)		
PS	2	1	1	9 (7)	1	
SC		10		4 (3)		
SP	2 (1)	1		3	8	
CP	4 (1)	10				
AP ^a		1		12 (9)		
FP ^a	1	3		9 (5)		

^aOne school combined the items under Administrative Problems (AP), Facility Problems (FP), and Teacher Problems (TP), into a larger grouping that was called School Features. Therefore, only 13 schools are reported for the AP and FP areas.

The following observations about 14 schools can be made from inspection of the table.

SS - School staffs, and students to a lesser extent, tend to view Student Characteristics and Relationships as one of the more problematic

¹School Attractiveness was not covered in the Staff Questionnaire. Principal-Teacher relationships and Teacher Problems were not covered in the Student Questionnaire. For these areas, then, there is no basis for comparison.

areas. Staff in 12 schools were below the mean (T-score 50) and students in these schools tended to agree. Students in 2 schools, however, were not on the negative side in their perceptions as shown by the number in parentheses in this row.

TS - Teachers in all 14 schools view Teacher-Student relationships as one of the more positive things in their schools. Teachers are more positive than students about these perceptions in 12 schools, less positive in 1 school, and about the same in another. While students are on the positive side in 9 schools, their perceptions are on the opposite side of the mean from the teachers' perceptions in 5 schools.

TT - Students appear to overestimate the Characteristics and Relationships among Teachers relative to the teachers themselves. While teachers are on the positive side in 10 schools, they are less positive than students in 7 and in 4 schools where teachers' views are negative, student perceptions are inverted, that is, they perceive teacher characteristics and relationships positively.

PS - Teachers tend to underestimate the relationships between principals and students as compared to the perceptions of students themselves. In 10 schools teachers are on the negative side. Yet, in 7 of these schools, students view their relationships with their principal as positive. In 1 school where teachers are positive they are, nevertheless less positive than students.

SC - On the whole teachers and students perceive the school community relationships positively. Students, however, appear to be more positive. While teachers in 4 schools are on the negative side, students in 3 of these schools are on the positive side and in 10 other schools are more positive than teachers. (This observation can be made only cautiously, since students had only 2 items to respond to in this area, whereas teachers had 6 items.)

SP - In general, Student Problems such as cutting class, vandalism and profanity are perceived as weaknesses by both staff and students. Yet teachers tend to be somewhat more "optimistic" than students about Student Problems. In 11 schools they are on the negative side of the overall mean, but in 8 of these schools they are less negative than students. Students in 12 of the 14 schools express concern about

Student Problems since in one school where teachers are positive, in fact more positive, students hold an opposite viewpoint.

CP - The area called Community Problems is responded to favorably by teachers in all 14 schools and by students in 13 of the 14. Teachers and students tend to see their communities as strengths rather than weaknesses relative to most other areas of the questionnaires.

AP - Teachers, on the whole, perceive Administrative Problems. Their average response is positive in only 1 of the 13 schools reported for this area. Students on the other hand, observe much less trouble in this area, showing reversals in 9 of the schools where teachers feel negatively. This difference of opinion is not surprising, since one might anticipate that teachers have more substantial expectations about such things as discipline and the adequacy of counseling and medical services.

FP - Facility Problems, specifically class size and/or condition of building or grounds, are seen by staff as weaknesses in 9 of the 13 schools. Only students in 4 schools share, to a lesser extent, the same negative opinion, since the student perceptions represent reversals in 5 of the 9 schools.

It has been noted above that 3 areas of the questionnaires were not presented to both staff and students.

The general acceptability or attractiveness of the school (SA), covered in the student questionnaire only, contains items about the number of subjects to choose from, the amount of school spirit shown by students, etc. Schools are about equally split in this area, with students being positive in 6 schools and negative in 8 schools.

Only teachers were asked to respond to the areas about Principal-Teacher Relationships (FP) and Teacher Problems (TP). Staffs in 9 of the 14 schools viewed their relationships with their principals positively. They responded negatively in only 1 school to the teacher problem area (specifically teacher turnover and teacher absenteeism). In all other schools this area is viewed as a relative strength, i.e., as having an absence of problems relative to most other areas of the questionnaire.

While all of the above findings are of some interest, it must be remembered that they are based on the specific items in the questionnaires and upon the relatively small number of schools that cooperated in the field trials.

Suggestions Made By Consultants

A number of specific suggestions were made by the consultants about the content of the instruments. Also, some general suggestions were made concerning the potential for developing similar survey procedures for other systems/agencies.

Some Suggestions About Specific Content Are Presented Below And Discussed.

About the Student Questionnaire --

"Only two items are included on school/community relationships. On the teacher's questionnaire there are six items which cover this material. In the case of this school it would have been helpful to have more items on the student questionnaire about this area as so much that happens in schools is a reflection of the social action occurring in the community."

About Both Questionnaires --

"The staff felt that statements such as the following should be added to render a better balance of factors that are related to Teacher-Student Relations: 1) Students' refusal to follow the teacher's request; 2) Disruptive, attention-getting student behavior; and 3) Passive aggressive student behavior such as always being late for class, never having books and materials for class, or never hearing what the teacher says."

About the Demographic Information Form --

"The DIF does not give enough school system-wide information that we have felt necessary to have in order to establish system-wide priorities rather than school-wide priorities. Improvements that met our needs were made."

Excerpts From The Interview Form For Use With The Central Administration Are Shown Below As Examples Of The Kinds Of Information Sought:¹

III SCHOOL BOARD DATA

- A. Is your school board elected ____ or appointed ____
- B. How many members?
- D. How often does the board meet?
- F. How would you characterize the philosophy of the school board?

¹The editors wish to thank Dr. Lenore Flax Walker for furnishing the document from which these examples were taken.

IV FINANCES

C. Do you receive titled monies for your district?

No. Students
Eligible

Name of Program

Amount

Title I

Title III

Title IV

Title VI (B.E.H.)

Other (please specify)

VI STAFF CHARACTERISTICS

F. 3. Do you have an affirmative action plan?

yes

no

being developed

G. 1. Who is the recognized bargaining unit for the staff?

President _____ Telephone No. _____

2. for the administration?

President _____ Telephone No. _____

VII SCHOOL PROGRAMS

B. 3. In what fields do you propose to write a new curriculum?

C. 1. Does the district presently have a policy concerning affective education programs?

2. Who is responsible for development and implementation?

IX SPECIAL SERVICES

A. 1. Who is responsible for the administration of Special Services?

3. Does this person have line _____ or staff _____ authority?

4. What programs are administered by this department?
(Check all those appropriate.)

- a. Child Study Teams _____
- b. Special Education Classes _____
- c. Special Education Teachers _____
- d. Supplemental Instructors _____
- e. Speech Teachers/Therapists _____
- f. School Nurses _____
- g. Guidance Counselors _____
- h. Other _____

Discussion

The items covered in the questionnaire have purposely been limited to maintain reasonable time frames for administration. As noted elsewhere, they are to be used for screening purposes only and, as such, to explore issues that are common to most schools. Users are encouraged to write questions of their own to examine potential problems that may be peculiar to their settings and situations.

The DIF was developed for use at the building level and represents a means to systematically explore those features of a school and its setting which may give rise to problems or which may act as constraints upon possible solutions to problems. It should be used flexibly. For example, one consultant felt that the section on "dress code" was too lengthy. When the consultant is already quite familiar with a school, judgment about covering such material can be used.

The interview form which is illustrated by way of example above would appear to be very useful in initiating a district-wide survey.

Suggestions About Extensions In The Application Of The General Methodology Are:

At the Elementary Level --

"From my experience with these two schools, the survey forms appear useful at a primary school level. It would be worth considering an alternate form of the survey geared toward 5th and 6th grade students. A parent form should also be developed."

For Use in Follow-Up Evaluation --

Interventions based on survey information can, and should be followed-up with evaluations of their effectiveness. The questionnaires may be used for this purpose. Perhaps this should become a standard part of the procedure.

At the Secondary Level --

Consideration should be given to developing questionnaire forms that would be appropriate for parents of junior and senior high school students.

In Other Agencies --

The general survey methodology may have application in such other institutions as general hospitals, convalescent hospitals, and certain elements of criminal justice and juvenile justice systems.

Any such systems have a number of components which must interact: the administrators; the professional staff; the non-professional staff; the patients, clients or recipients of services; and in some cases, relatives or close friends of the client group. Each of these groups may have different needs, objectives, perceptions and expectations of the system. Different views are sometimes complimentary and sometimes sources of problems. The use of the survey methodology to provide an analysis of the needs and perceptions of different groups within such systems could be expected to have beneficial effects.